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CONFIDENTIAL.

(8519.)

PART I.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

A F F A I R S O F P E R S I A .

January to March 1905.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Persia.

PART I.

No. 1.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 1.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, January 2, 1905.

THE attack on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.

I have received Mr. Grant Duff's despatches Nos. 210 and 211 of the 5th ultimo.

In the event of the Persian Government pleading their inability to take the necessary measures for inflicting punishment on the Lurs, can you suggest any means for compelling them? The idea of a British punitive expedition could not be entertained.

What indemnity would you propose to demand, bearing in mind that mere compensation for the losses sustained by the two officers would hardly be sufficient to meet the case?

No. 2.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 2.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, January 3, 1905.

WHAT are your views as to the proposed increase of the Consular guard in Seistan, referred to in the Viceroy of India's telegram of the 28th ultimo?

No. 3.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 3rd January, relative to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk and the affairs of Seistan.

India Office, January 4, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

January 3, 1905.

(Telegraphic.) P.

PLEASE refer to the telegram of the 28th October last, from Lord Ampthill, regarding the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

This question has apparently reached a deadlock. I find that opinion has recently been expressed by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, and by Colonel MacMahon, that the Hashmat is not a worthy object of solicitude, and it is probable that we should not have committed ourselves to his support so strongly, had it not been for the attitude taken up towards him by the Russians in connection with the 1903 disturbances. It has occurred to me that it might not be impossible to make an Arrangement with the Persian Government about Seistan affairs generally, which would be a gain rather than a loss to us, and which might be accepted by the Persian Government. Our objection to the removal of the Hashmat might be withdrawn, provided—

1. That suitable provision is made for him in some other province;
2. That the Persian Government give a promise, in writing, that Yamin will be recalled from Seistan when our Mission is withdrawn;
3. That a strong Governor, to be approved by us, shall be appointed to Seistan and retained in his appointment.

Please refer also to Memorandum by MacMahon, dated the 5th November, 1904, on the Mirjawa question (copy of which was forwarded with our Foreign Secretary's letter of the 1st December last).

I should be glad if satisfactory settlement at Tehran with regard to Mirjawa can be included in the proposed Arrangement with the Persian Government. Should it be possible to attain all the objects specified above, not only would an opportunity be given to the Persian Government of acting up to the assurance given by them, as reported in the penultimate paragraph of the despatch of the 26th October last from Grant Duff, but we should be able to promise them to withdraw MacMahon's Mission at a very early date.

(Repeated to Sir A. Hardinge.)

No. 4.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 2.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE received Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 209 of the 2nd December, 1904, relative to the recent attack on Major Gough by armed Kurds near Urmi.

I approve the action taken by Mr. Grant Duff in the matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

LANSDOWNE.

No. 5.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 3.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE received Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 208 of the 1st December, 1904, reporting his instructions to His Majesty's Acting Consul at Kermanshah upon his proceeding to Laristan in connection with the recent attack on Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.

I approve the instructions given to Mr. Williams on this occasion.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

LANSDOWNE.

No. 3 A.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 1.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

SEISTAN Consular Guard.

Your telegram No. 2 of the 3rd January.

I agree entirely with Viceroy in thinking that our guard should not be inferior to that of the Russians.

(Repeated to India.)

No. 3 B.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 2.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

HASHMAT-UL-MULK.

Viceroy's telegram to the India Office of the 3rd January.

I am sending home by bag a long account of my discussions about the Hashmat with the Grand Vizier, who says that he has not yet been deposed, but that the Persian Government are anxious to remove him. His Highness said he would give me a definite answer after further conversation with the Persian Minister in London, who is now here.

With considerable pressure, I think we might secure the reinstatement of the Hashmat, but most likely he will only be allowed to return after Noruz (21st March), and he will have to bribe the Court and Grand Vizier more heavily than he has hitherto done. All Provincial Governors, however, who come to Tehran have to submit to this vexation.

I quite agree, on the other hand, with Colonel McMahon and Mr. Grant Duff that the Hashmat-ul-Mulk is politically of little use to us, and that if the Persian Government chooses it can, while restoring him to office, completely paralyze his power to help us in any way. I would therefore sacrifice him if I could get a satisfactory *quid pro quo*, but, in view of Dobbs' promises, I think we ought to endeavour to prevent him from losing personally in the matter.

The Shaukat-ul-Mulk, in spite of Russian support and an offer to the Grand Vizier of 4,000*l.*, has just been deposed, and we might get this Governorship for the Hashmat.

(Repeated to India.)

No. 3 C.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 3.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

ATTACK on Douglas and Lorimer.

Your telegram No. 1 of the 2nd January.

I suggest demanding an indemnity of 1,000*l.* to be shared between the two officers, besides their out-of-pocket expenses, amounting in all to nearly 2,000*l.* In view of financial straits of Persian Government, we might, I think, diffuse payment of this over two years, in quarterly instalments.

Should the Persian Government plead their inability to punish the Kurds, or fail to do so within a year from the date of the attack, we might demand that they should allow us to undertake the task, not by means of a British expedition, but by authorizing the Bakhtiari or other tribes to carry out the operations under the direct supervision of an officer to be deputed for the purpose by us.

However, the Persian Government assure me that the Ferman Ferman's expedition will start in ten days. Williams will accompany it.

(Repeated to India.)

No. 6.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 4.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE considered, in communication with the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Grant Duff's telegrams Nos. 147 and 148 of the 3rd and 5th December, 1904, relative to the proceedings of the Persian Customs Department in seizing the British mails at Bushire.

I approve the action taken by Mr. Grant Duff in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 7.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 7.)

Sir,

India Office, January 5, 1905.

WITH reference to Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 10th December on the subject of the Seistan Boundary Award, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to transmit, for Lord Lansdowne's information, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy in reply to his message of the 19th December of which a copy was sent to you on the following day.

Lord Lansdowne will see that the Government of India have accepted Sir A. Hardinge's modifications of their proposal; and, further, have strengthened Sir A. Hardinge's amendment to clause 5 by substituting the word "shall" for "should."

Should Lord Lansdowne see no objection to this further modification, Mr. Brodrick proposes to acquiesce in the decision which the Government of India have communicated to Colonel McMahon.

It will be observed that Mr. Dane has been instructed to explain the matter to the Ameer of Afghanistan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

December 30, 1904.

McMAHON'S Irrigation Award. Your telegram of the 19th instant. We accept draft B with proposed modifications, subject to substitution, in both places in clause 5 of the Award, of word "shall" for "should." We are instructing McMahon to make announcement at such time as he may think fit; and, with reference to final paragraph of your telegram of the 28th November last, Dane will be instructed to explain matter to Ameer.

No. 8.

Sir C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, January 5, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an official communiqué from the "Agence Télégraphique de Saint-Petersbourg," which is published this morning, stating that the American and Persian Governments have expressed to the Russian Government their gratitude for the assistance rendered by the latter Government in settling the incident caused by the murder of an American missionary at Ouroumia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 8.

*Extract from the "Journal de Saint-Petersbourg" of December 28, 1904
(January 5, 1905).*

L'AMBASSADEUR de Russie à Washington a communiqué au Gouvernement Impérial la reconnaissance des États-Unis de l'Amérique du Nord pour le concours prêté par la Russie dans le règlement de l'affaire relative à l'assassinat d'un missionnaire Américain par des Persans à Ourninia.

D'autre part le Gouvernement Persan a exprimé au Gouvernement de Russie sa profonde reconnaissance pour le règlement du dit incident.

No. 9.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 9.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 9th January, relative to the Seistan Water Award.

India Office, January 9, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 9, 1905.

SEISTAN. My telegram of the 29th December last.

Telegram from Colonel MacMahon states that he will not be in a position to announce his Water Award until the 15th instant, and that he thinks it would be better to postpone it till a settlement is come to at Tehran about Mirjawa, as it would then be possible for him to leave Seistan. Indefinite postponement will not be practicable.

MacMahon has been authorized to defer for the present delivery of Award, and I hope it will be possible for His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to effect settlement of the Mirjawa question at an early date.

Explanation of the Award to the Amir has been deferred in consequence of the proposals to Seistan put forward by His Highness, regarding which I am addressing you in a separate telegram.

(Repeated to Sir A. Hardinge.)

No. 10.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, January 9, 1905.

ATTACK on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.

With reference to your telegram No. 3 of the 5th instant, before deciding on further steps for the punishment of the Lurs, it will be best to await the result of the action of the Persian Government. It is unlikely, however, that His Majesty's Government will permit any responsibility for punitive operations against the tribes to be accepted by a British officer.

The arrangement you propose as to the indemnity is approved.

No. 11.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 9, 1905.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, copies of correspondence* respecting a recent attack, by Lar tribesmen, on Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas, Military Attaché to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, and Mr. Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, while travelling on the public service in South-West Persia. The incident in question occurred on the Dizful-Khoremahad road, which has been, for some years past, in a very unsafe condition.

The Lords Commissioners will observe, from the telegram No. 121 of the 2nd November, and the reports in the despatch No. 211 of the 5th December, from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, that these officers made an arrangement with the Chiefs of the Direkward Lurs, who agreed, for a certain sum of money, to act as their escort on the road. The party left Khoremahad on the 23rd October. When, however, they had proceeded some 80 miles on their journey, the tribesmen began to demand a further sum of money, on the plea that the original agreement had only applied to Mr. Lorimer and did not include Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas. While negotiations were proceeding, a number of men rushed the camp and commenced to carry off various articles. In the struggle which ensued, shots were fired and stones thrown by the Lurs, and Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer were both wounded, the former somewhat severely. Eventually the camp was looted, and the two officers returned to Khoremahad with hardly anything except the clothes in which they stood.

His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at once addressed a verbal representation to the Persian Government, holding them responsible for the safety of the wounded officers, and demanding the punishment of the guilty tribe, and eventual compensation for the losses incurred. Mr. Grant Duff's action was approved, and he was instructed to make a further representation on behalf of His Majesty's Government. Copies of the notes exchanged with the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs will be found in his despatch No. 210 of the 5th December.

It will be seen from this correspondence that the Persian Government are reluctant to admit their responsibility in the matter, on the plea that Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer were warned, before starting on their journey, of the dangers to which they would be exposed. There is, however, no doubt that the incident is primarily due to the very disturbed condition of that part of Persia, to which the attention of the Persian Government has been repeatedly called by His Majesty's Legation. The Persian Government must, therefore, be held liable not only for the reimbursement of the actual losses and expenses incurred, but also for the payment of suitable compensation to the victims of the outrage.

The actual demands to be made by His Majesty's Government in this connection have not yet been finally determined. As will be seen from Sir A. Hardinge's telegram No. 153 of the 19th December, the losses and expenses are estimated at 8227 1/2s. To this must be added about 500l. for the expenses and fees of the American missionary doctor, whom it was arranged to send down from Hamadan to meet the wounded officers, and further expenditure may be entailed by the serious nature of Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas' wound.

Some delay may very probably occur before the sum due is paid over by the Persian Government, who will, doubtless, follow the usual course of endeavouring to recover it from the guilty tribe. Lord Lansdowne, however, considers it undesirable that Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer and their servants should be compelled to await reimbursement of their losses during the whole progress of the negotiations. The necessity of immediate repayment has already arisen in the case of Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas' sown, who has been recalled to India.

His Lordship would, therefore, propose that the actual losses and expenses incurred, together with the expenses and fees of the American doctor, should be at once refunded

* Mr. Grant Duff, No. 121, Telegraphic, November 2; ditto, No. 123, Telegraphic, November 2; ditto, No. 211, December 5; to ditto, No. 66, Telegraphic, November 2; Mr. Grant Duff, No. 126, Telegraphic, November 4; ditto, No. 210, December 5; ditto, No. 144, Telegraphic, November 28; to India Office, November 29; India Office, December 7; Sir A. Hardinge, No. 153, Telegraphic, December 19, 1904.

to the parties concerned, pending recovery from the Persian Government, and I am to request that the sanction of the Lords Commissioners may be given to this arrangement.

It is understood that the advance would be made on behalf of the Government of India and the Imperial Government, and that, in case it should prove impossible to recover the amount from the Persian Government, one-half of the liability will rest with the Indian Exchequer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GORST.

No. 12.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 10.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosure in a letter from the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta, dated the 1st December, 1904, relative to the quarantine cordon in Khorassan.

India Office, January 9, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Lieutenant-Colonel Minchin to Government of India.

Mashed, November 19, 1904.

(Telegraphic.)

GOVERNOR-GENERAL has received orders that for future the money for payment to Persian staff of quarantine cordon shall be drawn direct from the newly-appointed Belgian Treasury officer in Mashed, and not through the Russian Consul-General as before. It is not clear whether Captain Yass will draw money from the Treasury, or whether Persian Officer Commanding Persian staff will draw it and disburse to staff, but apparently latter. For last four months no pay has been issued to staff of cordon, and Russian Consul-General is pressing Persian authorities here hard for payment of money through him as before, but Tehran Government insist on payment being made through Treasury. Strong rumours current here of pending removal of cordon, and Captain Yass has informed Winter that he is going away.

Can I be informed how the quarantine affair now stands?

(Addressed to Tehran. Repeated to India.)

No. 13.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 12.)

Sir,

India Office, January 11, 1905.

IN continuation of Sir H. Walpole's letter of the 12th October, 1904, on the subject of quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to inclose, for Lord Lansdowne's information, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 31st December, 1904, reporting that steps are being taken to carry out Sir A. Hardinge's suggestion that European, rather than native Indian, Assistant Surgeons should be employed on quarantine duties at the Persian Gulf ports.

The Government of India have not again reported their views on the further suggestion that the Persian Government should be relieved of the expense; but I am to request that you will draw Lord Lansdowne's attention to their views upon this point stated in the Viceroy's telegram of the 12th August, 1903.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

December 31, 1904.

(Telegraphic.) P.

QUARANTINE at ports in Persian Gulf. Steps are being taken by us to replace the Assistant Surgeons at present posted at Bunder Abbas and Mohammerah by appointing suitable European officers at the earliest possible date. If we can obtain suitable men, we propose also to carry out a similar change at the other Gulf ports.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 14.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 12.)

Sir,

India Office, January 11, 1905.

WITH reference to previous correspondence ending with your letter of the 5th instant on the subject of the threatened deposition of the Amir Hashmat-ul-Mulk by the Persian Government from the Governorship of Seistan, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to inclose, for Lord Lansdowne's information, a copy of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 3rd January, 1905.*

Mr. Brodrick will be glad to be favoured with Lord Lansdowne's views upon the proposals of the Government of India.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

January 3, 1905.

(Telegraphic.) P.

PLEASE refer to the telegram of the 28th October last from Lord Ampthill regarding the Hashmat-ul-Mulk. This question has apparently reached a deadlock. I find that opinion has recently been expressed by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, and by Colonel MacMahon, that the Hashmat is not a worthy object of solicitude, and it is probable that we should not have committed ourselves to his support so strongly had it not been for the attitude taken up towards him by the Russians in connection with the 1903 disturbances. It has occurred to me that it might not be impossible to make an arrangement with the Persian Government about Seistan affairs generally, which would be a gain rather than a loss to us, and which might be accepted by the Persian Government. Our objection to the removal of the Hashmat might be withdrawn, provided—

1. That suitable provision is made for him in some other province.
2. That the Persian Government give a promise in writing that Yamin will be recalled from Seistan when our Mission is withdrawn.
3. That a strong Governor, to be approved by us, shall be appointed to Seistan and retained in his appointment.

Please refer also to Memorandum by MacMahon dated the 5th November, 1904, on the Mirjawa question (copy of which was forwarded with our Foreign Secretary's letter of the 1st December last). I should be glad if satisfactory settlement at Tehran with regard to Mirjawa can be included in the proposed arrangement with the Persian Government. Should it be possible to attain all the objects specified above, not only would an opportunity be given to the Persian Government of acting up to the assurance given by them, as reported in the penultimate paragraph of the despatch of the 26th October last from Grant Duff, but we should be able to promise them to withdraw MacMahon's Mission at a very early date.

(Repeated to Sir A. Hardinge.)

* Copy sent to Foreign Office, January 4, 1905.

No. 15.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 12, 1905.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 147 of the 15th August, 1904, I transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg,* on the subject of the Urumia murders. Sir C. Hardinge forwards an official communication from the Agence Télégraphique de Saint-Petersbourg, stating that the American and Persian Governments have expressed to the Russian Government their gratitude for assistance rendered in the settling the incident in question.

I shall be glad to receive any observations which you may wish to make on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 16.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 10th January, relative to the Henjam guard.

India Office, January 12, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, January 10, 1905.

YOUR telegram of the 29th December.

I assume that no action is being taken by you in the matter of the guard for Henjam, in view of what was stated in the telegram of the 30th December from Sir A. Hardinge.

No. 17.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 14.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 12th January, relative to the Henjam Guard.

India Office, January 13, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 12, 1905.

HENJAM Guard. With reference to the inquiry in your telegram of yesterday, action has for the present been deferred.

* No. 8.

No. 18.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 14.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 13th January, relative to the Karun irrigation.

India Office, January 14, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 18.

*Government of India to Sir A. Hardinge.**January 13, 1905.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

KARUN irrigation.

My telegram of the 28th December last.

Party, consisting of Major Morton, R.E., two native surveyors acting as private servants, and two personal attendants, will leave Karachi on the 19th instant. General scope of survey to be carried out has been explained by us to Major Morton, but you will perhaps send any further advice or instructions which you may think necessary, so as to meet him on his arrival in Persia.

We presume that our intention to make the survey is known to the Persian Government.

(Repeated to Secretary of State.)

No. 19.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, relative to the Seistan Boundary Award.

Lord Lansdowne sees no objection to the further modification in the Award proposed by the Government of India, or to the decision which they have communicated to Colonel McMahon.

His Lordship notes, from your subsequent communication of the 9th instant, that the delivery of the Award is deferred for the present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GORST.

No. 20.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 4.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, January 17, 1905.

YOU should use your discretion as to the best moment to inform the Persian Government of the engineers' mission in connection with the Karun Irrigation Scheme, referred to in the Viceroy of India's telegram of the 13th January last.

No. 21.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 19.)

Sir,
I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to inclose, for the consideration of the Marquess of Lansdowne, a copy of a letter from the Government of India regarding a number of incidents which have already formed the subject of correspondence between this Office and the Foreign Office and between the Government of India and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

India Office, January 18, 1905.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 21.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Secret.)

Sir,
WE have the honour to address you regarding the situation which has been created in Persia by the recent attacks on British officers and by a long series of unfriendly acts which bear the appearance of being deliberately directed to the diminution of British prestige and the detriment of British interests and of the interests of those in whose welfare we are concerned.

Fort William, December 22, 1904.

2. The cases to which we allude are the following:—

- (a.) The Urmia murders and the attack on Captain Gough;
- (b.) The outrage on Colonel Douglas and Lieutenant Lorimer while travelling in Luristan;
- (c.) The harassment of Koweit vessels by the Shah's Belgian Customs officials;
- (d.) The dispatch of Belgian Customs boats to the Shatt-ul-Arab in violation of pledges given by the Persian Government to the Sheikh of Mohammerah;
- (e.) The demand for payment of "droits de Chancellerie" on dates exported by Sheikh Khazal's Arab dependents;
- (f.) The institution of a Customs post at Godar-i-Balutak;
- (g.) The establishment of a preventive station on Kharag;
- (h.) Interference in quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf;
- (i.) Disturbance of the postal system at Bushire; and
- (k.) The attitude of the Persian Government with regard to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk and the Governorship of Seistan.

3. The main features of the several incidents are set out in the memorandum which we enclose with our present communication, and we do not propose to discuss them further in detail. Each is significant in itself, and in regard to each we have already intimated either to His Majesty's Government, or direct to the Legation at Tehran, the action which, it seemed to us, should be taken to secure our rights. There appears, however, to be a risk that with so large a number of outstanding questions, each forming the subject of a separate representation to the Shah's Government, the result may merely be a series of independent discussions, in the course of which the cumulative weight of the aggregate claims may be lost from sight.

4. Taking the several cases *seriatim*:—

(a) and (b) are matters in which the wrong done cannot be repaired, and in which we can only look for compensation in some form elsewhere. The only practical measure which seems likely to prevent the recurrence of such incidents is the institution of a local levy suggested in the Viceroy's telegram of the 7th November last.

As to (c) we have explained in our Secret despatch, dated the 8th December, 1904, the specific action which appears to be called for.

In regard to (d) and (e), we trust that no further attempt will be made by the Persian Government to infringe the Sheikh's undoubted rights. The incidents might well be used to press the question of Karun irrigation schemes in which both we and the Sheikh have special interests which were discussed in our despatch of the 10th November, 1904.

In the case of (f), we consider that the post should be removed, though the violation of the pledge given to Sir Arthur Hardinge entitles us to more.

As regards (g) we are prepared to abandon further discussion.

In respect of (h) and (i) we have formulated our proposals in the Viceroy's telegrams of the 27th October and 14th December. The insult offered by the mail incident of the 1st December has formed a general topic of notice in the press, and is one in respect of which we are entitled to special reparation.

As regards (k), we can but maintain our previously expressed opinion, with which it is believed that His Majesty's Government are in agreement, that the removal of the hereditary Governor of the Province—although his character may be open to criticism—would be interpreted throughout Persia as a punishment inflicted at the instance of Russian influence for his friendliness to British interests, and should not be acquiesced in if British prestige is to remain unimpaired in Seistan.

5. Apart from the foregoing points which arise out of the specific incidents noticed, there are other directions in which we think that compensation might be demanded for the above-named acts in respect of which no direct amends are possible. The Persian Government have themselves proposed that we should accept compliance with our wishes in regard to the Henjam-Bunder Abbas telegraph line as a sop to satisfy our claims in regard to events at Urmia. In Seistan we have for some time past been anxious to see direct telegraphic connection established with India; and a settlement of the Mirjawa border question, in which we should be glad to obtain a boundary somewhat more favourable than we fear can be claimed on a strict examination of our rights, is one which might well be included in our demands.

6. Which of these matters may be pressed at the present juncture with the greatest prospect of success, is a question on which we feel that Sir Arthur Hardinge must necessarily be in the best position to advise and His Majesty's Government to decide. In offering their observations on the course of recent events in Persia, the Government of India have been careful to avoid appearing to take advantage of Russia's preoccupations in the Far East, in order to apply pressure to the Shah, but this forbearance on the part of His Majesty's Government has met with no recognition at Tehran, and we cannot but notice that simultaneously with all these unfriendly symptoms to Great Britain, the Persian Government has just sent a complimentary Mission, with costly presents, to the Czar. We can now only express the hope that the long series of unfriendly acts culminating in some cases in positive insult and outrage, for which no apology has been offered or reparation tendered, may not be allowed to pass by without a determined effort to acquire some substantial satisfaction, and to impress upon the Persian Government that their present attitude is incompatible with the continuance of the harmonious relations which we are anxious to maintain.

7. We have forwarded to Sir Arthur Hardinge a copy of this despatch, together with its inclosures.

We have, &c.
(Signed)

CURZON.
KITCHENER.
E. F. G. LAW.
E. R. ELLES.
A. T. ARUNDEL.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.

No. 22.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 4.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 19, 1905.

KARUN Irrigation Loan. Your telegram No. 4 of 17th January.

The Grand Vizier has been pressing me for some time for a decision on this question, and I explained to him that the report of the irrigation engineer about to be sent to Abwaz by the Government of India would largely settle the matter. I asked his Highness, and he agreed, to instruct Herr van Hogen to discuss the proposed scheme with him fully, but confidentially.

(Repeated to India.)

No. 23.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 21, 1905.)

(No. 228.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 20, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that I returned to Tehran on the 16th instant from the leave of absence granted to me by your Lordship in October last, and resumed my duties as His Majesty's Minister in Persia.

I had interviews shortly after my arrival with the Grand Vizier and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who were, I learned, eagerly expecting my arrival in the hope that I should be able to announce a decision by His Majesty's Government favourable to their desires in connection with the Karun loan, and perhaps should be able to obtain for them better terms from the Government of the United States in connection with the indemnity for the murder of Mr. Labarre. I confined myself, however, in my conversations with both Ministers, to the formal Oriental compliments which constitute in this country the proper theme of a first visit, and I hope that it may be possible to defer any discussion of financial questions until after the return of M. Naus, who is expected here in the course of the present week.

I had the honour of being received by the Shah this morning at Perohabad, a country residence lately built by him a few miles from the city. His Majesty seemed much better than when I saw him last in the summer, and was extremely gracious and talkative.

His Highness had commanded me to inquire personally on his behalf as to His Majesty's health, and to inform him that he had bestowed on me the Knight Commandership of the Order of the Bath as a mark of his warm interest in Persia and of his desire for the strengthening of the good relations between the two countries. I delivered the message from His Majesty of which the Shah expressed his warm appreciation. His Imperial Majesty reminded me of the ancient friendship which had subsisted since the sixteenth century between the two Empires, and, turning to his brother, the Naib-es-Saltaneh, who stood by him, expatiated on the cordiality of his welcome by the King and the Prince of Wales on the occasion of his visit to England. He went on to say (evidently having Seistan and other matters in his mind) that suspicions as to the sincerity of his friendship had at one time existed in London, but he hoped that they were now a thing of the past, and that he looked to me to render service to both Governments by helping altogether to dispel them. His manner was unusually genial, and without any trace of the nervous constraint which often marks his formal reception of foreign Envoys. He referred to the impending arrival at Tehran of his Minister in England, who I hear is to stay here a month and then return with some presents and personal messages for the King, perhaps as a kind of retort to the special mission of the Arfa-ed-Dowleh to St. Petersburg.

I am taking advantage of Lord Errington's departure in a day or two to send this and a few other despatches to your Lordship, but propose putting off till the regular messenger my impressions as to the present situation. I would wish, however, to take this opportunity of reporting that Mr. Grant Duff, who has acted during my absence as His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, has conducted the business of the Legation in a manner meriting your Lordship's commendation. He has settled several troublesome claims which had for a long time past been in the stage of deadlock so common here, and, by obtaining the removal of the incompetent Governor of Urmiah, has greatly facilitated the settlement of our difficulties in that district. And whilst firmly maintaining, as in the matter of the Bushire post-office question, our rights and prestige, he has preserved those personally cordial relations with the Shah's Ministers which are so important to the successful management of all public affairs at this Court.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 24.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 21, 1905.)

(No. 229.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 21, 1904.

MR. GRANT DUFF has shown me a telegram from your Lordship, No. 59 of the 23rd September, asking for my views as to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's request for

the omission of a certain passage in your Lordship's despatch No. 121 of the 8th August, or rather in my note embodying that despatch, respecting the meaning of the term "Customs of Fars and of the Persian Gulf."

I think it probable that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh was speaking the truth when he said that he made this suggestion by the Shah's desire. It seems, however, likely, as his Excellency has not since reverted to the subject, that His Imperial Majesty has allowed it to escape his memory, and in this event we may, I think, allow it to drop.

Should the Persian Government, however, return to it, I would suggest, for your Lordship's consideration, that I should be authorized to reply that your object in using the expressions to which exception has been taken was not to threaten the Persian Government, but merely to make it absolutely clear, in that Government's own interests, that we should have to enforce our rights in certain contingencies. That if the Shah attaches serious importance to the omission from a formal communication of these expressions, you would be prepared to omit or at least modify them, on the understanding that the Persian Government on its side agreed to modify certain passages in its note to myself which had appeared to you wanting in clearness, and otherwise unsatisfactory. That, with regard to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's intimation that he might reopen the discussion on the subject should your Lordship be unable to comply with his demands, the Persian Government were naturally free to amplify the statement already made by them, but that a discussion necessitated two parties to it, and that His Majesty's Government saw no necessity for re-explaining the views and intentions which they had already repeatedly set forth. I might add that since the exchange of these notes the question appeared to have been finally disposed of by the signature of the "Règlement Douanier" both by the Russian Legation and by our own, inasmuch as the observations attached to that "Règlement" plainly decided the point in our sense, Mohammerah, and all the other southern ports of Persia to Gwetter inclusive, being treated in it as "ports of the Persian Gulf."

I think it very unlikely that the Persian Ministers, who have displayed in the past so marked a disinclination to grapple with this question, will raise it in any form again. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh is rather fond of suggesting amendments to communications addressed to him by foreign Legations, and, though I have on one or two occasions, where the issues at stake were unimportant, met his wishes in this respect, I do not regard the practice as one to be encouraged.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 25.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 21, 1905.)

(No. 230.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 21, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches from His Majesty's Consul at Kernanshah, now on special service at Urmia, giving details respecting the recent attack on him.

The new Governor of Urmia and the Shah's Special Commissioner have arrived at Tabreez, and I have instructed His Majesty's Acting Consul-General to deliver to them a message expressive of my satisfaction at their mission.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 25.

Consul Gough to Mr. Grant Duff.

Sir,

Urmia, November 21, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to bring to your notice that on Saturday last, the 19th instant, I was attacked by a party of Kurds in the vicinity of this town. The following are the details of the affair: I was, as is my custom, out for a ride accompanied by two gholams, mounted, but unarmed, and two sowars of my escort in uniform, and was on my way home, when, near the village of Dizah, between 1½ and 2 miles in a direct line from the town, I saw four armed men cross the road. I must mention that the place where we were

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was just above the cultivation, and at the foot of the hills which separate the Dasht Plain from the Valley of Urmī.

The men directly they saw my party ran towards the hills, and, as they ran, began pulling off their rifles and loading them.

As a precautionary measure, I ordered my sowars to get some ammunition ready. I thought that the four men had mistaken me for a pursuing party after them, and that when they saw that I was not molesting them they would proceed on their way.

Another party of five or six men, however, ran down the hill, making the whole party from eight to ten men. When I saw them loading their rifles and aiming at me, as they were only about 100 yards or less away from me, I ordered my men to gallop. We had hardly got into our stride when we were hotly fired on. We were, however, luckily unhurt, and crossing a small ridge we halted, and, taking a rifle myself, I went with one of the sowars to the crest and fired one or two shots. The Kurds, however, had got higher up and their shots were falling among the horses, so I again mounted and got into a depression, whence we again fired. Again, however, some of the Kurds got above us, and one or two of them also got round our other flank, and, as their fire got very unpleasantly hot, I again mounted and we rode off, fired at for some distance, and finally reached the American Mission unharmed.

I regret to state that I think none of the Kurds were hit, as the rifles of my escort were very badly sighted. The whole engagement took, I suppose, some 15 to 20 minutes. It occurred within half-a-mile of the village of Dizah. I append a rough sketch* showing the main features of the country. The Dasht Plain lies to the west of the range of hills.

My assailants were seen going over the hills after my retreat. On my return I sent a man to inquire privately in the village of Dizah as to who these men were. He was told that a party of eight Kurds, followers of a Begzadeh Chief named Tamar Beg, had been round their village for some days and had stolen things out of it. I sent a man immediately to the Governor, Haji Nizam-ed-Dowleh, to inform him of the occurrence.

He very promptly sent a force of cavalry to occupy the villages of Dizah and Banda and "to make inquiries" there. In the morning (20th) the villagers came to me to petition that the Persian cavalry had seized several of their headmen, had tied them by the heels to trees, stripped them, and were beating them, and inflicting other tortures on them, such as putting needles under their finger-nails, in order to extort money.

During the course of the day a reinforcement of Persian cavalry were sent to these two villages to "get information," and since then there has been a mob of men of these villages following me, who tell me that their wives are being dishonoured and violated, their children beaten, and all their possessions robbed. I wrote to the Governor last night to say that I would not have these savage cruelties practised in my name, and that I requested that he should instruct his troops that their duty was to get information and not money. The villagers are now willing, they say, to give the names of the eight men who attacked me.

Both Dizah and Banda are halting places of the Dasht Kurds whenever they wish to go to and fro between the city and the Dasht Plain. Banda is in a defile which is the main entrance to that plain, while there are several paths over the hills.

I apprehend that the Dasht Kurds were originally very much afraid at the presence of a British Consul with an escort, but have now become used to our presence. They have seen that our presence here has had no ill-effects for them; the Persian Government have taken no steps against them, and they have been especially encouraged by the continued stay in Urmī of the Muztehed Mirza Hussein Agha.

It is, in my opinion and in the opinion of the missionaries here, essential that steps should be taken without delay to curb the insolence of these Dasht Kurds. They have gone as far as an absolutely unprovoked attack on the British Consul, accompanied by his escort in uniform, with which everybody is now well acquainted, in broad daylight, and within a couple of miles of the town. Could insolence go farther? It was most unfortunate that I was obliged to retire before them, as, although I had only two very badly sighted rifles with me, the Kurds will of course repeat that they gained a great victory over British troops, for, after all, they were but eight unmounted men, while we were five mounted! If measures are not taken at a very early date, I am of opinion that it will no longer be safe for the English and American missionaries to stir abroad from the city. My escort is not sufficiently large to protect everybody, even were the presence of the escort of itself sufficient to guarantee safety from attack, which it evidently is not, and if the missionaries are prohibited from going abroad, for either business or pleasure, their presence here becomes impossible, and they will have to go, and with them goes British prestige.

* Not printed.

The Dasht Kurds have again lately been seen hanging about in the gardens between the city and the American College. The Governor has, of course, taken no action against them, although he has been informed of their presence, and although it would be no difficult job to manage their capture while thus close to the town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. GOUGH, Captain.

P.S. November 21.—It is probable that the Governor will report to the Valiahd that the villagers of Dizah and Banda tell him that the men did not come from the Dasht Plain at all, but from a village a mile or so north of Dizah. This will be to screen the Dasht Kurds whom his Highness the Valiahd seems to have taken under his protection. He may also report that the villagers say that there was no attack at all, or if there *was* an attack, it was only one man firing, as his (the Governor's) man, who had been collecting "information," has undoubtedly been trying to persuade the villagers to say. Unfortunately for him, the villagers told me this morning that without a doubt it was eight followers of Tamar Beg of the Dasht Plain who had attacked me. The Governor came to see me this afternoon, and as he went away he met his head Mamur, who had been at the villages, and asked him if he had any news. The Mamur replied that he had gathered from the village that there had been no attack, and that possibly one man had fired, but he was not sure if it had been at me. He then turned to some villagers he had brought down for confirmation of the story. Mejd-es-Saltaneh, a local Khan, who had been with the Governor to see me, questioned the man also. The latter was an old man, and a Haji. "Oh, Haji, tell the truth, this is Ramazan, and you cannot lie." The man promptly replied that the party were Dasht Kurds, followers of Tamar Beg. This will show the line of action taken by the Governor. My Mirza was a witness of the scene, and Mejd-es-Saltaneh came back and told me the story. Altogether I should say about thirty shots were fired at my party from beginning to end.

H. G.

Inclosure 2 in No. 25.

Consul Gough to Mr. Grant Duff.

Sir,

Urmī, November 28, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your telegram received to-day, informing me that you had demanded the punishment of the Kurds implicated in the attack on myself on the 19th instant.

I have this evening heard from the Haji Nizam-ed-Dowleh, the Governor, that he had received telegraphic orders to proceed against the Dasht Kurds immediately. I will hear further details to-morrow, and will keep you posted.

The Governor wrote in his own handwriting, though unsigned and unsealed, a letter to the Mejd-es-Saltaneh, formerly Governor here, saying that he attributed the trouble here to the enmity shown to himself by the Mejd-es-Saltaneh and the Vali here, and going on to say that he called on the Mejd-es-Saltaneh to capture the Kurds whom I have demanded of him, and threatening that if this were not done he, the Governor, would use his power to *break* both the Mejd-es-Saltaneh and the Vali. Both these men are well disposed towards us, and Mejd-es-Saltaneh has already been severely punished by the Valiahd for the help and sympathy he displayed at the beginning of the troubles. Both men have now telegraphed to Tabreez asking permission to leave Urmī, which they say is rendered impossible for them owing to the Governor's hatred. I fear it would but lead to worse things if our influence were to be used openly in their favour, but the Mejd-es-Saltaneh at least should not suffer for the aid he has given us in this matter.

I hear that one Kurd was hit in the arm in the encounter of the 19th, but this has not been confirmed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. GOUGH, Captain.

No. 26.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 15.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 21, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 228 of the 20th ultimo, reporting that you have resumed your duties as His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, and commending the manner in which Mr. Grant Duff has conducted the business of His Majesty's Legation during your absence.

I have read with satisfaction your commendation of Mr. Grant Duff's good services, in which I concur.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 27.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 26.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 25th instant, relative to the Seistan Water Award.

India Office, January 25, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 25, 1905.

MY telegram of the 29th ultimo regarding Seistan Water Award. I have given McMahon authority to substitute, in clause 5 of the Award, as modified, the words "British Government" for the words "Government of India."

(Repeated to Sir A. Hardinge.)

No. 28.

*Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 28.) **

(No. 6.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 28, 1905.

I HAVE just received a message from the Hashmat-ul-Mulk to the effect that his enemies in Seistan are preventing his son from collecting the maliat, and that the Government are pressing him for an old claim of about 2,000*l.* He declares that it has been trumped up. He wishes to get money transferred from Seistan through the Bank, to whom he offers a bill at one month. The Chief Manager, however, does not know him sufficiently well, and asks for a Legation guarantee. This would be a mere formality, as the Hashmat is well worth that money. Would your Lordship or the Government of India authorize me to give it? Please reply immediately, as he is being pressed hard.

With regard to his return to Seistan, the Ala-es-Sultaneh, without saying so in so many words, hinted to me that it would probably be arranged. He has had several interviews with the Shah and the Grand Vizier, and says their results have been satisfactory.

(Repeated to India.)

No. 29.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 30, 1905.

WITH reference to my letter of the 23rd September, 1904, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran* relative to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's request for the omission of a certain passage in the note addressed to the Persian Government, defining the meaning attached by His Majesty's Government to the term "Customs of Pers and of the Persian Gulf."

It appears that the question will probably be allowed to drop, but Lord Lansdowne proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to authorize Sir A. Hardinge to reply to the Persian Government in the sense he suggests should they revert to the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 30.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 31.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 28th January, relative to the necessity for policing the Bunder Abbas-Kerman-Yezd route and restoring order in Persian Baluchistan.

India Office, January 30, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 30.

Government of India to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 28, 1905.

PLEASE refer to my letter of the 8th November last. Favourable opportunity for urging upon Persian Government the necessity for restoring order in Persian Baluchistan and for efficiently policing the Bunder Abbas-Kerman-Yezd route appears to be afforded by the incidents reported in the telegram of the 21st instant from Sykes.

(Repeated to Secretary of State and Major Sykes.)

No. 31.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received February 2.)

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, January 31, 1905.

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 9th instant, with reference to a recent attack by Lur tribesmen upon Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas, Military Attaché to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, and Mr. Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, while travelling on the public service in South-west Persia.

The amount of actual losses and expenditure incurred—for the repayment of which the Persian Government is liable—is estimated at a present total of 872*l.* 1*s.*, and it is proposed that this sum should be at once advanced to the parties concerned.

In reply, I am to request you to inform the Marquess of Lansdowne that my Lords sanction the proposed advance in respect of the losses of the servants, &c., one moiety to be charged against India pending recovery from the Persian Government.

As regards Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Vice-Consul Lorimer, they direct me to inquire whether the Secretary of State is satisfied that their proceedings were prudent, and that they were in no way to blame for the incident.

I am, &c.
(Signed) VICTOR CAVENDISH.

No. 32.

India Office to Foreign Office.— (Received February 2.)

Sir,

India Office, February 1, 1905.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to inclose, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter from the Government of India in which the appointment of a Military Attaché to the Staff of the Consul-General at Meshed is strongly recommended.

For the reasons stated by the Government of India, the Secretary of State for India in Council is prepared to sanction this appointment, provided that Lord Lansdowne concurs in its expediency, on the understanding that the expense will be divided in accordance with the rule governing Diplomatic and Consular expenditure in Persia between the Imperial and the Indian Exchequers.

It is proposed that the total annual pay of the appointment (including exchange compensation allowance) should be fixed in rupees at rates equivalent to the following sterling rates, according to the rank of the incumbent, viz. :—

	£	s.	d.
For a Lieutenant	574	8	0
For a Captain	700	0	0
For a Major	927	4	0

with the addition in each case of a travelling allowance on the scale allowed to political officers stationed in Persia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Fort William, December 1, 1901.

WE have the honour to forward a letter from the Quartermaster-General in India, in which sanction is asked for the appointment of an Intelligence Officer as a Military Attaché at Meshed.

2. Lord Kitchener considers such an appointment a necessity, and in this opinion we entirely concur. We have no agents, Consular or otherwise, in Central Asia, the nearest Consul in Russian territory being, it is understood, at Batoum. We are consequently obliged to rely on native information, which, unless very carefully managed and sifted, is frequently unreliable. Meshed is practically the only place from which reliable information of Russian movements and preparations can be obtained, and a Military Attaché if appointed could organize and develop a system of intelligence by reliable and tested agents. We therefore desire strongly to recommend the proposal for sanction, as one calculated to improve our present system of gaining intelligence.

3. Until recently the collection and reporting of intelligence regarding Russian military movements have been left entirely to our Consul-General, who, however, is too fully occupied by his political and Consular avocations to allow of his devoting as much time to this important question as it undoubtedly deserves. During the past summer we have enjoyed the advantage of the presence in Meshed of an officer attached to the Indian Intelligence Branch, who had been deputed on a roving commission to Khorasan and Trans-Caspia; since June last he has been temporarily stationed at Meshed, where he has to a large extent relieved the Consul-General of this special branch of his duties and with the best results.

4. The Military Attaché if appointed would be a member of the staff of, and under the orders of, the Consul-General at Meshed, but would correspond direct with

the head of the Intelligence Branch at Simla, who would, subject to the approval of our Foreign Department, give him instructions from time to time. Arrangements would be made by the Intelligence Branch at Simla for any special inquiries from Meshed which the General Staff in London might require to be made at any time.

5. We propose that the pay of the appointment should be pay of rank plus 450 rupees per mensem staff pay and exchange compensation allowance, and travelling allowance on the scale allowed to political officers stationed in Persia. This remuneration is, in our opinion, more suitable than granting a separate local allowance, and by no means too high, having regard to the high cost of living in Persia.

6. In asking for sanction to the creation of the appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed on the terms proposed, we would strongly urge that His Majesty's Government should bear half the cost, with reference to the principle laid down in your predecessor's Political despatch, dated the 15th November, 1901, that an even division of charges and not a separation of spheres of interest is to regulate expenditure in the maintenance of Consular and Diplomatic establishments in Persia, which principle, we consider, may fairly be applied in the present case. The officer appointed will be a Military Attaché at the Consulate, and His Majesty's Government will participate in the advantages which will accrue from the collection of intelligence regarding Russian military activity and resources in the regions bordering on Persia. A line can hardly be drawn between military and political affairs in Persia, and it is evident that the information collected would be of an immediate political as well as of potential military value. We trust, therefore, that His Majesty's Government will agree to an equal division of the cost between the Imperial Government and the Government of India.

We have, &c.
(Signed) E. FG. LAW.
E. R. ELLES.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
J. P. HEWETT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Major-General Selater to Government of India.

Simla, September 17, 1904.

I HAVE the honour, by direction of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, to request that the sanction of the Government of India may be obtained to the appointment of an Intelligence Officer, to be officially known as Military Attaché, at Meshed.

2. The importance of Meshed as a centre from which to gain early intelligence of Russian movements and preparations has always been recognized, and has been specially marked during the present year, and Lord Kitchener, fully recognizing the many deficiencies of our present system of gaining intelligence, and convinced of the necessity of improving it with the least possible delay, thinks that it is at Meshed where we can most profitably begin the initiation of a better system.

3. With our over-widening interests in the Persian Empire, with Afghan temper an uncertain quantity, with the gradual development of Russia's power of offence in the north, and with the distance between the two great Powers diminishing with a steady regularity, the increased necessity for the utmost vigilance on our part, and for full and prompt information of Russian movements is apparent. Indeed, the extraordinary activity of the Russians in pushing on strategic railways, whose sole purpose it is to menace Afghanistan and India, is in itself, in his Excellency's opinion, sufficient justification for the present proposal.

4. We have no Consular or other recognized agents in Central Asia; travellers are viewed with the greatest suspicion and openly shadowed, with the result that we are forced to depend chiefly on unreliable, uncertain, and almost wholly unorganized information from untrained native agents.

5. To attain the best results from such sources as are available, and to better the organization and develop on sound lines our system of intelligence, his Excellency considers the appointment of a Military Attaché at Meshed a necessity, and he trusts

that the Government of India will accord its sanction to this proposal. Should the proposal be accepted, I am to suggest the following arrangements regarding the pay and status of the Military Attaché. Pay of rank plus staff pay at the rate of 250 rupees per mensem and compensation allowance, other local and travelling allowances to be as for political officers stationed in Persia. He would be a member of the staff of, and under the orders of, the Consul-General at Meshed, but would be empowered to correspond direct, by post and telegraph, with the head of the Intelligence Branch at Simla, who, subject to the approval of the Foreign Office, would give him instructions from time to time. Should the General Staff in London require, at any time, special inquiries made from Meshed, the matter would be arranged through the head of the Intelligence Branch at Simla.

No. 33.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 2.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 31st January, relative to the proposed advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

India Office, February 1, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 31, 1905.

SEISTAN. I should be glad to know whether Government of India would agree to proposal to guarantee, jointly with Foreign Office, advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk of 2,000*l*. See the telegram of the 28th instant from Sir A. Hardinge.

No. 34.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4, 1905.)

(No. 232.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 29, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship, with reference to my despatches Nos. 161 and 172 of the 1st and 11th September last, correspondence which has passed between myself and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on the subject of the prohibition by the Persian Government of the employment in silk factories by non-Mussulmans of female labourers.

The British interests in the silk industry of Mazanderan and Ghilan are insignificant as compared with those of France, Russia, Turkey, and Italy, and I think that if the prohibition of female labour in silk factories is likely to be enforced by the local authorities in such a manner as to seriously affect the industry, the Legations of those countries will have to press the Persian Government to abrogate this order. I have, however, instructed His Majesty's Consul at Resht to watch the matter and report to me any cases in which the enforcement of the order by the Persian authorities gives rise to remonstrances by Russian or other foreign subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 34.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Translation.)

August 28, 1904.

SINCE the working of Mussulman women in cocoon factories, &c., belonging to non-Moslems, is contrary to the laws of the Mahommedan religion, and causes evils and creates difficulties, strong orders in accordance with the Royal desire have been issued for the prevention of women from entering such factories.

If the owners of the factories require labourers, they should employ men and boys of 10 or 12 years of age for picking cocoons.

A period of fifteen days' grace has been allowed in order that during this time the owners of factories may make arrangements for men and boy labourers, and after the expiration of this term no women will be allowed in the factories.

I have no doubt that this general prohibition will be communicated by you to all merchants and subjects of your Government.

(Signed)

Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Inclosure 2 in No. 34.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

(Extract.)

August 29, 1904.

I HAVE also the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Circular order to the Mazanderan authorities respecting the non-employment of women in the shops of persons not professing the Mahommedan religion, and to ask whether the order, which presumably applies to the silk industry in Ghilan as well as in Mazanderan, has been communicated to the other Legations, those of France and Russia, as well as to the Turkish Embassy. It will affect the trade of numerous French and Russian, as well as of Greek and Ottoman subjects engaged in the silk industry of the Caspian Provinces.

The number of British subjects affected by it is, I imagine, insignificant, and from the British point of view there is no need for me to trouble your Excellency with a long controversy on its merits; but it appears to me that it is open to objection on two grounds.

In the first place it is somewhat offensive to the honour and dignity of the Christian merchants. The only reason for which it can be supposed to have been enacted is for the protection of Persian women, and it assumes, therefore, that such women will run greater danger of improper or indecent treatment in the "ambars" or workshops of European than of Persian employers. This supposition is, in my opinion, quite unjustifiable, and during the four years that I have been in Persia I have had no case ever brought to my notice of impropriety on the part of a British subject of whatever class towards any respectable Persian woman. Moreover, the overseers in most of the workshops are Persian Mahommedans, and it could probably easily be arranged that they should always be so. The distinction, however, between Mussulman and non-Mussulman employers of female labour has no sanction in the Law of Persia, where free intercourse with women not their wives or relatives, such as European custom allows, is prohibited to Mahommedans as well as to persons of all other religions.

If the rules which place women in a greater seclusion than elsewhere, oblige them to veil, and so on, are compatible with their picking cocoons for Mahommedan employers, why should they preclude their doing the same work for Christian or other non-Mahommedans? What has the question as to whether the Gospel or the Koran is the latest revelation from God got to do with the picking of cocoons?

A more serious objection to the proposal is that it gives an unfair advantage to Mahommedan as compared with Christian foreigners, and places the trade of the latter in a position of disadvantage incompatible with the spirit of the Treaties. Female labour is much cheaper and more easily obtainable than that of men or boys, and it is obvious that if the Christian merchant has to pay more dearly for his labour than his Mahommedan competitor, he will be prevented by the Government from trading on equal terms with him, and that complaints of injustice and of attempts to destroy the trade of Europeans on the pretext of religious or moral objections which

have no solid foundation, will be made to the interested Legations. Numerous Persian families, whose women now find employment in these ambars, will at the same time by the loss of the wages earned by them, become impoverished and discontented.

It is surely not to the interest of the Persian Government to discourage the silk industry in the Provinces of Ghilan and Mazanderan by placing obstacles in the way of foreign traders engaged in it. Those traders put money into Persia; the shops and factories which they establish employ and increase the means of numerous Persian subjects; with the silks which they export they buy goods in Europe, the duty on which goes to increase the Shah's revenues and the general resources of the country. To allow them, therefore, to be driven out of the country by the persecutions of such men as the Governor of Barfurush, in order that the latter may make a few tomans of mudakhel in bribes, is to sacrifice the general welfare and progress of the Shah's Empire to the selfish and trivial interests of a petty official. I also submit to your Excellency that, whilst it is necessary that the Government should do nothing which can offend the religious prejudices of its Mahomedan subjects or violate the real teaching of the Prophet, it is desirable, in accordance with the practice of all civilized nations, to minimize as far as possible, rather than accentuate, religious differences and distinctions when this can safely and gradually be done; and that where, as in Ghilan and Mazanderan, female labour has long been employed without question by European merchants, it is wiser to let the sanction remain in force.

The above remarks are dictated by a sentiment of sincere regard for the interests of the Persian Government and for the welfare and progress of Persia, as well as for the special interests of my own countryman, Mr. Stevens, who will not, I imagine, be immediately injured by the new law, as he has picked his silk and is leaving for Tabreez.

Inclosure 3 in No. 34.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Translation.)

December 17, 1904.

IN reply to your Excellency's note respecting the prohibition of female labour in factories belonging to non-Mussulmans, I have the honour to inform you that I have laid the matter before His Majesty the Shah.

I cannot deny the soundness of the contents of your Excellency's note, but in any question it is necessary to take the most important points into consideration. Since the Persian Government's chief object is to maintain peace and security for foreign subjects and to encourage their trade, it is incumbent on them to anticipate and prevent any incident which may run counter to this sacred duty, or which may give rise to any trouble. If, therefore, the Persian Government, well acquainted as it is with the state of affairs in the country, has refused, or will refuse, to give the desired permission, it is in view of maintaining security for foreigners and their trade. I have no doubt that, after a little consideration, your Excellency will agree with me on this point.

(Signed and sealed)

Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Inclosure 4 in No. 34.

Sir A. Hardinge to Consul Churchill.

(No. 3.)

Sir,

Tehran, December 29, 1904.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith translations of correspondence which has passed between myself and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on the subject of an Order issued by the Persian Government forbidding the employment by non-Mussulmans of female labourers in silk factories.

I request you to watch the matter, and report to me any cases, whether of British or of other non-Mussulman foreigners, in which the prohibition of female labour in silk factories is enforced by the local authorities, and the action of the Russian or other Consulates in connection with it.

You should not, pending the receipt of further instructions, oppose the enforcement of the order in the case of British subjects, provided it is acquiesced in by your foreign colleagues.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 35.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 1, 1905.)

(No. 238. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 29, 1904.

THE United States' Minister called on me to-day and informed me that his Government had come to a settlement with that of Persia respecting the Urmia incidents on the following lines:—

President Roosevelt had agreed to reduce the indemnity to be paid by the Persian Government for the murder of Mr. Labaree from 50,000 tomans (8,500*l.*) to 30,000 tomans (5,000*l.*), to be paid in gold at once, on condition of the perpetual imprisonment of the chief criminal, Seyyed Ghaffar, who would not be brought to trial, and the infliction of such corresponding penalties on the accomplices, as soon as the latter were arrested, as might be deemed adequate by the United States' Government.

If, however, (1) Seyyed Ghaffar, who is now being sent in custody from Tabreez to Tehran, should now or at any other time escape from confinement, or if (2) by the 1st March, 1905, the Persian Government failed to bring the remaining accomplices to justice, or if (3) any attempt were made by the Persian Government to collect the amount of the indemnity by the levying of any fresh tax on the Christian population of the district of Urmia, then the reduction granted by the President would be held to have been cancelled, and the full sum of 50,000 tomans would be exacted. This would, in the opinion of my American colleague, supply him with the necessary leverage for insisting upon the fulfilment by the Persian Government of the promises given by it to arrest and punish the accomplices.

Mr. Pearson informed me that the ultimatum which he addressed to the Persian Government had at first been answered by a refusal, and that he had been told, on what authority he did not say, that the Russian Legation had privately advised the Persian Ministers to reject his demands, assuring them that he was "bluffing," and would not be supported at Washington. A few days later, however, the Persian Government quite suddenly announced to him its acceptance of them all, merely making a personal appeal to the President's generosity to reduce the amount of the indemnity, and he attributed this change of attitude to its having learned from its Representative at Washington that Mr. Roosevelt was quite determined to insist on compliance, and would enforce it by the dispatch of an American squadron to the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Pearson mentioned to me in connection with the sequestration of a sum sufficient to provide the indemnity required by the United States' Government out of the proceeds of the customs of one of the Gulf ports, which had at one time been contemplated in the event of the Persians continuing obstinate, that he had reported to his Government that these customs, unlike those of the North, were not assigned as a security to foreign creditors, and could, therefore, be freely dealt with, the debt of Persia to the Imperial Bank formerly secured on them having been paid off out of the proceeds of the first Russian loan. I informed him, confidentially, that since that loan a fresh debt to English creditors amounting to 500,000*l.* had been incurred by the Persian Government, and guaranteed on the proceeds of the Gulf customs, but that, speaking unofficially, I had no reason to suppose that His Majesty's Government would object to the small indemnity due to the United States being drawn from that source of revenue, out of which an ample sum remained at Persia's disposal after paying interest on her English borrowings. It will, of course, now, as a matter of fact, be paid out of the general customs revenue.

In my to-day's conversation with the Grand Vizier, reported in a separate despatch, I adverted to the Urmia affair and to the manner in which the Persian Government had had to yield in the long run to threats more than it would have had to grant had it been willing to defer at an earlier stage to the friendly representations which I had made both to his Highness and to the Valiabad. The Amir-ed-Dowleh confirmed my impression that his resistance to our moderate demands had been inspired by the

Valiahd, and admitted that His Imperial Highness, whilst assuring me that he would gladly expel the Mollah Mirza Hussein Agha if only the Grand Vizier would allow him to do so, had been telegraphing to Tehran, in reply to inquiries from here, to the effect that the removal of the Mollah was inopportune. His Highness, however, observed that the dismissal of the Governor of Urmia and the undertaking to exile the Mollah were concessions made to us and not to the Americans, in whose ultimatum these requirements had not been included.

I hear from Azerbaijan that the Valiahd is doing what he can to obstruct the work of the Special Commissioner sent by the Shah to Urmia, but Mr. Pearson thinks that this will not much matter, as once His Imperial Highness realizes that these tactics are only likely to lead to an increase of the indemnity, he will probably be quick to change them. He has, however, agreed to urge the Persian Government to expedite the arrival at Urmia of the Shah's Commissioner, whom the Valiahd appears to be detaining at Tabreez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

P.S. December 31.—I have just been informed by the Ain-ed-Dowleh, on whom I was calling, that Seyyed Ghaffar was brought into Tehran in chains to-day.

A. H. H.

No. 36.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4, 1905.)

(No. 234.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 29, 1904.

I INFORMED the Grand Vizier, in the course of a long conversation which I had with him to-day on the subject of the Karun irrigation scheme, that your Lordship had intimated to me that you were disposed to assist financially in it, provided that the Irrigation Officer who was being sent to Ahwaz at the joint expense of the British and Indian Governments reported that the proposed dam would not, by diminishing the water supply in the Lower Karun, impede its navigation and thus injure British trade.

His Highness said that what was proposed was to store the water in certain reservoirs, and then let them out into the irrigation canals only when the Karun was high in the spring, and he expressed himself as confident that the total normal volume of water in the river would not be diminished in such a way as to hinder navigation. He suggested that, even if it did, the objection I had mentioned might be met in other ways, *i.e.* by deepening the river bed, or by building a tramway line for the transport of goods from Mohammerah to Ahwaz; but I pointed out that this latter solution would not help traders, as a more expensive mode of land transport would not compensate for the diminution of the water facilities now enjoyed by them.

The Ain-ed-Dowleh went on to observe that the construction of the dam was an absolute necessity for Persia: that if we declined to lend the money for it he would have to apply for it elsewhere, and if the work was undertaken with the help of others the British Legation would not be able to complain, as I had done with respect to Persia's action in connection with the first Russian loan.

I thanked his Highness for the frankness of this statement, and said I hoped he would forgive me if I observed with equal frankness that should the Persian Government contract a further Russian loan for an object in Southern Persia, which we considered injurious to our commercial interests, such action could only be regarded by us as deliberately inimical, and would convert our present friendly attitude towards it into something very different.

The Grand Vizier replied that he might not necessarily apply to Russia for the money. I said that no other country but Russia or England would, especially in face of the conditions of the Russian loan contracts, provide him with a loan. Except Turkey, whose political interests in Asia were identified, like ours, with the maintenance of the independence of Persia, there was no Government which regarded her preservation as an object of importance, and none, certainly, in my opinion, which would make political loans or incur any risks and sacrifices for her benefit.

His Highness asked then what I thought his course ought to be if we absolutely refused to help him even after it had been demonstrated that his scheme would not injure the river or our commerce. I replied that we had not said that we should do so,

and that the dispatch of an Indian Irrigation Officer to the Karun was an earnest of our friendly interest in the enterprise. He promised to order M. Naas, when this officer arrived, to instruct Herr van Roggen, who was now at Ahwaz with two fresh European engineers for the purpose of preparing a further report on it, to discuss the whole project with him, and he agreed with me in thinking it advisable for the present that such discussions between them should, in view of the presence of a Russian Consular Agent of Dutch nationality on the Karun, be of a strictly confidential nature.

We then proceeded to the question of Seistan, and I delivered the message with which your Lordship charged me at our last interview at Lansdowne House, explaining very fully your reasons for regarding the deposition of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk as a measure of which we had a right to complain. His Highness took exception to my describing the Hashmat and his family as the Hereditary Governors of Seistan, and said that the district anciently ruled by them was that of Kain, to which Seistan proper had been added by Nasr-ed-Din Shah its administration having formerly been vested in a body of local Sirdars. On my observing that the present Chief of Kain had not been deposed, although, unlike the Hashmat, he had disregarded the Royal summons to Tehran, the Ain-ed-Dowleh replied that I was mistaken. In spite of the intercession of the Russian Legation on his behalf, the Shaukat-ul-Mulk had been told that, whether he chose or not, he must come here, and although he had been finally allowed to stay at Birjand after travelling a few stages, on the strength of a certificate by the official specially sent there to enforce compliance with this order, that the journey would mean his certain death, the Government had now been taken from him and transferred to one of his brothers as a temporary deputy. The Asaf-ed-Dowleh, Governor-General of Khorassan, had proposed that the latter should be definitely appointed Governor, but the Persian Government had replied that he must first come to the capital and satisfy them as to his fitness for the post. The Government's object was to institute a more efficient administration throughout the outlying border provinces, by which I understood the Grand Vizier to mean that it aimed at a greater centralization and at the gradual suppression of the tribal Chiefs, such as those who, in Kuchan, Birjand, and other districts of Khorassan still wield a kind of feudal authority. I said I quite admitted that many of these Chiefs were drunkards, opium smokers, and in other respects by no means ideal rulers, but with all their faults—and I was not blind to those of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk—they often kept their districts, which were their homes and with which all their personal interests were bound up, not to speak of the greater local knowledge and experience which they possessed, in better order than could be done by a strange official from Tehran, who would regard his appointment to a post such as Seistan as a hateful exile, and whose only object would be to make as much money in as short a time as possible out of it. If his Highness aimed at placing in Seistan a more enlightened official than the Hashmat, or one more in touch with the views of the Persian Court, he could attain this end without making any radical change in the Local Government by appointing a really efficient Karguzar.

We did not wish to dictate to the Persian Government in matters of internal administration, but the tranquillity of Seistan was a matter of great importance to that of the Afghan border and of our own, and if, in spite of our earnest representations, changes were made which we considered detrimental to that tranquillity, we might have to demand other securities for its maintenance. I pointed out that the Russian Government had been given such a security on the Trans-Caspian frontier in the form of the permanent Perso-Russian Commission at Gumbadi Kuboon, and remarked that, while I was not authorized to put forward a demand for a similar concession to ourselves in Seistan, your Lordship had mentioned it to me as one which might perhaps in certain contingencies have to be considered.

His Highness said that, before giving me, for transmission to your Lordship, a final answer to your message, he must have a conversation with the Ala-es-Sultaneh, with whom he had not yet had leisure to discuss these matters fully. He reminded me, however, that the Persian Government, though they had found it necessary to detain the Hashmat-ul-Mulk here, had not yet deprived him of his Government, which was still being carried on in his name by his son. They were elaborating certain proposals for the future administration of Seistan, which they believed would be advantageous to British interests and acceptable to His Majesty's Government. His Highness did not describe these proposals, but intimated that he would do so on a subsequent occasion. He assured me, however, very emphatically that his attitude towards Seistan affairs was not due to any Russian inspiration, and I believe personally, from what I know of him, that he is far from wishing to encourage Russian aims on the eastern frontier. His

distrust of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk seems to be due partly to reports, not of Russian agents, but of Persian officials who are that Chief's personal enemies and have endeavoured to injure him by reporting him as unduly friendly to British interests, and partly from an idea that a creature of his own will be a more reliable Ruler of Seistan from his own point of view than a member of the local ruling family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 37.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.-(Received February 1, 1905.)

(No. 235.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 30, 1904.

I OBSERVE in section 4 of the 29th October of the Persia and Arabia Confidential Print, which I had the honour to receive by the messenger just arrived here, a telegram dated the 27th October from the Government of India to Mr. Secretary Brodrick respecting Persian quarantine arrangements, and an alleged intention to dispatch Dr. Bussière in connection therewith to Kermanshah.

Undue significance should not, I think, be attached to the fact that Dr. Bussière is the medical adviser to the Russian Consul-General at Bushire. The Residency surgeon, Dr. Condon, acted until quite lately in that capacity, but during one of his professional visits to the Russian Consul-General, irritated at the language of certain English and Indian newspapers which he had just been reading respecting Russian reverses in the Far East, lost his temper, and was so offensive about England that Dr. Condon excused himself from further visits to him and advised him to send in future for Dr. Bussière. I have since heard here from the French Chargé d'Affaires that there has now been unpleasantness between Dr. Bussière and the Russian Consul-General, that he has had to complain of the latter's behaviour to the Russian Legation, and that Dr. Bussière will probably not remain much longer at Bushire, at any rate in the employ of the French Government. If he enters the Persian service, as he may possibly do, though I have no reason for supposing that he will, we could hardly object to his deputation on quarantine service to Kermanshah, but I should certainly be disposed to do so, so long as he is even partially in the employment of the French Government, unless similar rights and duties are assigned to our own local Consular surgeon.

With respect to the general question of quarantine, it is possible that it may again be raised now that M. Nans has returned from leave of absence, but I hardly think it likely that either his excellency or the Persian Ministers will be in a hurry to reopen it, and I do not propose to do so myself unless instructed to that effect by your Lordship. Should the question arise, I could very likely obtain a formal recognition of the position now held *de facto* by our doctors in the Gulf ports in return for our acceptance of a procedure for the issue of orders to them less offensive to Persian susceptibilities than the present one; but the proposal to place the quarantine arrangements at Kermanshah under the supervision of Dr. Williams would not, I believe, be agreed to. The Russian Legation would certainly insist on equal rights for their own Consular doctor at that place, just as I did last spring when there was a question of placing Dr. Lusouppoff in charge of quarantine, and the protest made on that occasion by M. Nans against the employment of a Russian physician would be repeated with equal energy against that of Dr. Williams. If, as seems likely, the cholera reappears next spring in Kermanshah, I have little doubt that the local quarantine will once more be administered by M. Molitor, in whose fairness and efficiency, so far as it is possible to be efficient with such inadequate resources, our experience of last summer justifies us in feeling reasonable confidence.

With respect to my suggestion that we might by contributing more largely to the pay of our quarantine doctors strengthen their position in the Gulf—a suggestion which the Government of India seems to think would be regarded here as derogatory to the Shah's prestige—I would merely observe that the Persian Government, as well as individual Persians, certainly display an exaggerated sensitiveness about their dignity, except when it comes to accepting arrangements financially advantageous to

them, and they would probably be more ready than they now are to bear both our quarantine control and that of the Russians if they did not entail the sending in of frequent claims by the Legations for arrears of pay due by them to our doctors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 38.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.-(Received February 1.)

(No. 236. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 30, 1904.

THE Netherland Minister referred, in conversation with me to-day, to the statement made by him to Mr. Grant Duff and reported to your Lordship in his telegram No. 3 of the 19th October respecting the Karun irrigation scheme. He mentioned to me that Herr van Roggen was desirous of obtaining a concession for the construction of the Ahwaz dam from the Persian Government, the working of which he might possibly transfer to an international Syndicate, in return, so I gathered, for the assignment of certain shares in it to himself, and asked if I thought His Majesty's Government would oppose any scheme for irrigation works in South-western Persia which was not under exclusively English control.

I said that I should not be prepared to go quite so far as that, but that we should certainly not view with favour the formation of a foreign Syndicate, under cover of which foreign Powers having political aims inconsistent with our interests might conceivably acquire, whether by purchase or shares or otherwise, a political footing and influence in Arabistan. My impression, however, was that the Persian Government would be reluctant to give the concession to any foreign capitalists, and would prefer to construct the dam itself. M. Knobel observed that it had not the funds requisite for the purpose, and would therefore have to borrow them abroad, which would be a difficult business. I expressed my concurrence with this view, and implied, without saying it in so many words, that I rather doubted the practicability, under present conditions, of the project. My Dutch colleague said he could not recommend to his Government the encouragement of Herr van Roggen's ideas, as the lack of all order and justice in Persia would make it difficult for any concession of the kind to pay in the hands of a private Company, in the face of the obstruction and blackmailing tendencies of the local Chiefs and authorities, whose assistance would be essential to its success. I do not think he had got any inkling of the overtures made to us by the Grand Vizier or was trying to sound me about them. It appears to me, however, possible that when his Highness told me, as reported in my despatch No. 234 of yesterday's date, that if we refused him the loan he might procure it in other quarters, though not necessarily from Russia, his Highness had in his mind some suggestions from Herr van Roggen of obtaining it through a Dutch or Belgian Syndicate in return for a participation by the latter in its profits, and that these suggestions had been submitted to the Netherland Minister, who wished, before expressing an opinion on their feasibility, to ascertain what view we should take of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 39.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.-(Received February 4, 1905.)

(No. 237.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 30, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Resht respecting the attitude towards the Persian of the native and Armenian population in the Province of Gililan.

The diminution of Russian prestige and the openly expressed delight of all classes at the Russian reverses in the Far East are general throughout Persia, but are perhaps more striking in the Caspian Provinces than elsewhere, in view of the former subservience of the inhabitants to Russian influence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED CHURCHILL.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Consul Churchill to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 44.)
Sir,

Resht, December 23, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that by order of the Armenian Committee in Russia no flags were exhibited outside the houses and shops of Russian Armenians on the occasion of the Emperor of Russia's fête day on Monday last, with the solitary exception of the house of the Russian Armenian, Fajir Bashi, a certain Solomon, who is with good reason detested by all and sundry, but who somehow had some influence with the late Russian Consul, and now has with M. Offerieff. This influence he uses to enrich himself, and at the same time to harm persons whom he does not like by denouncing them as dangerous agitators, and thus preventing them from proceeding to Russia, should any of them require or desire to do so. I am told, however, that his behaviour has of late, outwardly at any rate, been better in consequence of a warning which reached him from the Central Armenian Committee, and I have been further informed that Solomon has so far escaped unhurt owing to the strict orders of the Committee prohibiting any violent measure in Persia, where they wish to do nothing to embarrass the Persian Government, Armenians being well treated in this country.

I must add in connection with the celebration of the Shah's fête on Monday that it has been customary to display Russian flags outside the Armenian Church on the 19th December, but that this was not done on Monday as part of the Armenian scheme to ignore the holiday. In regard to the attitude of the Armenian Church here towards the Russian Consulate since the seizure of the Armenian Church property in Russia, it may interest your Excellency to learn that M. Zeidler having on one occasion proposed to attend service in the Armenian Church last year, he was refused the customary strip of carpet which is plus 1 for members of the Consular body when they visit the church, and he consequently did not appear, whereas a carpet was placed for me at an Easter celebration which I attended, and special prayers were offered for His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen, and the Royal Family. I mention these circumstances as they show the bitterness which exists between the Armenians who, if they had not been estranged by the Russian Government, would in most cases have behaved loyally during the war, instead of which they take advantage of their earlier and better knowledge of the war news to keep the natives at Resht and Enzeli well informed of every circumstance and occurrence unfavourable to Russia.

The cholera epidemic in Gililan naturally reduced public interest in the course of the war, but since the restoration of calm the principal topic of conversation in private houses, bazars, and baths, is the war, and I have no hesitation in saying that Russian prestige has lost 85 per cent., the remaining 15 per cent. remaining to them in consequence of their proprietorship of the road, shipping (including steam launches) control of quarantine at Enzeli and other advantages which are the result of the Caspian Sea, being merely a Russian lake. To such an extent does this war interest Persians, that some merchants have gales with their correspondents in Baku, by means of which important war news is telegraphed to Resht. The information I have points to the fact that natives have lost their sense of fear of the Russians and their Cossacks, in proof of which I may mention an occurrence which could not have taken place before the 8th February. One of the Persian Cossacks of the Russian Consular Guard, having a dispute with a shopkeeper in connection with money due, the latter assaulted him, and with the help of some friends chased him out of the bazaar. Whenever a Russian now blusters he is told to go to Manchuria, which is also the advice which the Enzeli boatmen gave to M. Samsouff, the Secretary of the Russian Consulate at Enzeli, when he turned his revolver towards them in May last.

I had the honour on the 12th instant, when accompanying your Excellency to Resht, to tell you that when journeying to Enzeli on the previous day my boatman smilingly told me as we were passing a number of Lemozoff fishing boats, that they resembled Japanese vessels, and that it was a pity that no Russian men-of-war were about.

I could mention other instances to show to what extent the war is damaging Russian prestige here, but I think that the cases I have referred to in this despatch are a sufficient indication of the tendency of feeling against Russia, not unnatural when it is considered that the Persian in Gililan has for years past felt very much like what a mouse must feel when he is tightly held between the paws of a strong cat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED CHURCHILL.

No. 40

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne. (Received February 4, 1905.)

(No. 238. Secret.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 30, 1904.

YOUR Lordship desired about a year and a-half ago to ascertain the form in which the Russo-Persian Railway Agreement had been renewed in 1899, and I had the honour to report on the authority of the Atabeg-i-Azam that no new Articles had been drawn up and signed, but that the Agreement of 1890 had been simply prolonged for another ten years by a "destkhat" or autograph order of the Shah.

A secret informant lately showed Mr. Churchill such papers on the subject as are obtainable from the archives of the Persian Foreign Office, and I have now the honour to send your Lordship copies and translations of them for preservation in our own records.

They consist, as your Lordship will observe, of the original Agreement of 1890, a translation of which is published in "Aitchison's Treaties," and of a Memorandum communicated by the late Count Mouraviell to the Arfa-ed-Dowleh, Persian Minister at St. Petersburg in 1899, and translated from the Russian, which enumerates the prolongation of the Railway Agreement as one of three political conditions attached by the Russian Government to its first loan, and to which an autograph order of the Shah to the Shah Azam accepting these conditions is appended. This document is of interest as showing that the late Count Mouraviell attempted to obtain the hypothecation to Russia not merely of the Customs, but of all the other revenues of Persia, but that this condition was deemed excessive and rejected by the Shah.

The informant above mentioned added that Count Mouraviell had begun by asking that the Agreement of 1890 should be renewed "à perpétuité," but that the Persian Government refused this condition on the ground that such a pledge would be inconsistent with the Shah's sovereign rights. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs contended, as reported by the Arfa-ed-Dowleh, that it should be the object of the Persian Government to prevent the country from being divided into "spheres of influence," the north under the influence of Russia and the south under that of Great Britain, a result which would mean ultimate partition between the two. The wisest course for Persia was to preserve her integrity by leaning on the exclusive protection of one of these rival Powers, and as Russia was obviously her best friend, to give the sole right of railway construction to the Russians. The Arfa-ed-Dowleh, who was, as your Lordship knows, financially interested in the Russian loan, if not actually in the pay of the Russian Government, successfully supported in a despatch to his Government which has always been very sensitive about the partition of Persia into a northern and southern sphere the arguments advanced by Count Mouraviell.

I have sometimes suspected, from hints which have been dropped to me by persons here who ought to be well informed, that the prolongation of the Agreement of 1890 was for five and not for ten years, and that the Atabeg-i-Azam had deceived me in order to prevent our embarrassing him by raising the railway question at an inconvenient moment.

The Ain-ed-Dowleh, however, assured me some time ago, when I said I had heard that the Agreement terminated in 1905, that I was mistaken, and the text of

the Shah's "destkhat" supports this view. His Highness is not as fully acquainted with the conditions of the Agreement as he should be, for when I mentioned to him yesterday that if it was identical with that of 1890, published in Aitchison, it would prohibit a tramway line from Ahwaz to Mohammerah, he said he thought it only forbade lines on which steam power was used. Our discussion on this point will afford me an opportunity of returning to the subject, and endeavouring to ascertain whether the original conditions made by Count Mouraviéff may not, as is just conceivable, have been revised or modified, as the result of a further exchange of views subsequent to their first acceptance in principle by Persia.

Your Lordship will observe that the conditions made by Count Mouraviéff differs slightly from the Agreement of 1890. That Agreement prohibited all railway construction without exception. Count Mouraviéff explains, and the Shah accepts, the Agreement as meaning that Russia has the exclusive right of construction. The point is not of real importance, as it does not affect the earlier pledge given us by Naser-ed-Deen Shah, that we shall have the right of making a railway whenever such a right is given to Russia—a pledge which thus, in practice, prevents either Power from railway building so long as the Russian Agreement is in force.

I would suggest that the translation of the Agreement of 1890, inclosed in this despatch, should be substituted for that published in "Aitchison's Treaties" (Volume X, Appendix No. 25), since the latter, as your Lordship will see by comparing the two, contains certain verbal discrepancies, probably due to clerical error, and should be published for convenience of reference in the next edition of Hertslet's "Persian Treaties." That publication omits various documents of importance published in Aitchison (*i.e.*, the Jask Agreement), but as it is a less cumbersome work of reference than "Aitchison's Treaties" for the student of Persian affairs, it would be desirable to render it quite complete.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 40.

Memorandum by Count Mouraviéff.

(Translation from the Persian.)

COUNT MOURAVIEFF announces that the Russian Government is willing to advance immediately 60,000,000 fr. to Persia, with the guarantee of all the customs of Persia, excepting the customs of the Gulf of Pers and of Pers itself, and in the event of the foregoing customs not being sufficient for the instalments of this loan, the whole of the revenues of Persia will guarantee this loan on three conditions:—

Firstly, That the Persian Government engage not to make any kind of loan from abroad until the expiration of this loan of 60,000,000 fr.

Secondly, Out of these 60,000,000 fr. the previous Russian and English loans must be paid.

Thirdly, The Persian Government will renew the previous engagement and undertake that, for another ten years, excepting the Russian Government, no other Government will be given a concession to build railways in Persia.

(Signed) MOURAVIEFF.

10th Shaban, 1317 (December 14, 1899).

Shah's Rescript.

His Highness the Sadr Azam. I have agreed to the three conditions, but the matter of the whole of the revenues must be cancelled.

Inclosure 2 in No. 40.

(A.)

Translation of Russo-Persian Railway Agreement, signed at Tehran, November 12, 1890 (1308), by M. de Butzow, Russian Minister, and the Amin-es-Sultan, Persian Prime Minister.

[Translation from Persian text in Persian Foreign Office.]

AS the Ministers of the Government of His Most Sacred Majesty the Shah have declared that there are difficulties in the way of their carrying out the engagements entered into in Rejeb 1306 (March 1888) regarding the construction of railways in Persia by Russian Companies, the Ministers of the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Czar of All the Provinces of Russia have agreed to alter the above-mentioned engagements as follows; and His Highness the Amin-es-Sultan, Grand Vizier of the Government of His Most Sacred, Sublime, and Absolute Shah of All the Provinces of Persia, and his excellency M. de Butzow, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of His Imperial Majesty the Most Mighty Emperor of All the Provinces of Russia, empowered by their respective Governments have drawn up the following conditions:—

1. The Persian Government engages for the space of ten years, beginning from the date of the signature of this Agreement, neither itself to construct a railway in Persian territory nor to permit nor grant a concession for the construction of railways to a company or other persons; and after the expiration of ten years the renewal of the prolongation shall be immediately between the two parties.

2. By railway lines is understood those upon which steam or another power is used, of which all kinds are included in this Agreement.

3. Tramway lines worked by horses are excluded from this Agreement, but only those in towns and on roads near towns.

4. A railway line from Tehran to Shemran, where the summer residences of His Most Sacred Sublime Majesty are situated, the most distant of which is 2 farsakhs from Tehran, is excluded from this engagement and Agreement.

5. After the signature of this Agreement, that portion of the document dated Rejeb 1306 (March 1888) relating to railways becomes null and void.

This Agreement, in duplicate, has been signed and sealed in Tehran.

(Signature of Amin-es-Sultan and approval of Naser-ed-Deen Shah.)

27th Rabbi-ul-Awal, 1308 (November 12, 1890).

Note.—A copy of the text given in "Aitchison's Treaties" is appended for convenience of reference. It bears internal evidence of having been translated from the Russian text, the reference to the previous Agreement of March 1888 having been purposely omitted.

Inclosure 3 in No. 40.

(B.)

Translation of a Russian Railway Agreement, signed at Tehran on November 12, 1890 (1308), by M. de Butzow, Russian Minister, and the Amin-es-Sultan, Persian Prime Minister.

(Text copied from Aitchison's Treaties, Appendix XXV, p. 29).

AS the Ministers of the Government of His Most Sacred Majesty the Shah have declared that there are difficulties in the way of their carrying out the former¹ engagements entered into regarding the construction of railways in Persia by Russian Companies, the Ministers of the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Czar of All the Provinces of Russia have agreed to alter the above-mentioned engagements as follows, and² His Excellency M. de Butzow, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of His Imperial Majesty the Most Mighty Emperor of All the Provinces of Russia, and His Highness the Amin-es-Sultan, Grand Vizier of the Government

Discrepancies with text (A).

¹ Actual date of former Agreement is given, viz., Rejeb 1306 (March 1888).

² The names of the two Plenipotentiaries are given in inverted order.

Word "thence" is here inserted.
 "The word is "on."

"Another" not "any other."

"Of which all kinds" instead of "and all such lines."

"This clause is worded thus:—

"Tramway lines worked by horses are excluded from this Agreement, but only those in towns and on roads near towns."

"The clause is altered after Agreement as follows:—

"That portion of the document dated Hedges 1306 (March 1888) relating to railways remains."

of His Most Sacred, Sublime, and Absolute Shah of All the Provinces of Persia empowered by their respective Governments have drawn up the following conditions:—

1. The Persian Government engages, for the space of ten years, beginning from the date of the signature of this Agreement, neither to construct a railway in Persian territory, nor to permit nor grant a concession for the construction of railways to a Company to (or ?) other persons; and after the expiration of the ten years the renewal of the prolongation shall be immediately discussed between the two parties.

2. By railway lines is to be understood all lines upon which steam or any other motive power is used and all such lines are included in this Agreement.

3. Tramway lines worked by horses and situated in or near towns are not included in this Agreement.

4. A railway line from Tehran to Shemran, where the summer residences of His Most Sacred Sublime Majesty are situated, the most distant of which is 2 farsakhs (about 8 miles) from Tehran, is excluded from this engagement and Agreement.

5. After the signature of this Agreement all documents concerning railways previously signed by the two Governments become null and void.

This Agreement, in duplicate, has been sealed and signed in Tehran.

27th Rabi-ul-Awal, 1305 (November 12, 1889).

No. 41.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne, (Received February 4, 1905.)

(No. 239.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 31, 1904.

ABBAS KILI KHAN, whom I sent on the 29th instant with an answer to a message on a non-political matter received by me from Haji Sheikh Fazlullah, a very influential and fairly enlightened Majeed, reports to me that the Sheikh gave him some rather interesting information respecting recent communications between the Ottoman Government and the Persian Ulama of Kerbela and Nejed.

Sheikh Fazlullah, on the occasion of a pilgrimage to Mecca rather more than a year ago, issued an order to all Shi'ah Mussulmans, which these Ulama indorsed, forbidding them to proceed to the Hejaz by the overland route from Nejed through Jebel Shanman, on account of the insecurity prevailing in the region traversed by it, and due to the warfare between the rival factions of Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saud.

The Sublime Porte resented this action on the part of the Ulama of Kerbela and Nejed, and the Grand Vizier sent them a secret warning message, accusing them of acting at the instigation of the British Government which aimed, so his Highness alleged, at paralyzing the trade route through Nejd in the interest of the Sheikh of Koweit, and of its own designs in Central Arabia. In consequence of this message the Ulama modified their previous declaration, and permitted the use of the Nejd route to such Shi'ah pilgrims as were satisfied of their ability to traverse it in safety.

The Sheikh, who was received, as are all Persian ecclesiastics, with great kindness at Constantinople, by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, has returned here with marked Pan-Islamic tendencies, and having learned that His Majesty had deplored the indifference of Persian Muslims to the Hejaz Railway, has collected some 8000, among Persian merchants as a contribution towards that enterprise.

He expressed his sympathy with the present Amir Azam as compared with the Atabeg, and his delight at Russian reverses in the Far East, but his remarks on these subjects are not of sufficient interest to warrant my troubling your Lordship with their repetition. He also mentioned that he had received, when at Constantinople, a friendly message from His Majesty's Amir-uz-Zam, for which he was very grateful.

Your Lordship has doubtless heard from His Majesty's Representative at Bagdad that the Ulama of the Persian Ulama of Irak Arabia, Aga Fazl Shannouri, who played so important a part in the clerical agitation against the Atabeg-i-Azam in the summer of 1902, has lately died at Nejed. The Shah and Persian Government have

Indiscreetly in print: a. b. c. d. e. f. g. h. i. j. k. l. m. n. o. p. q. r. s. t. u. v. w. x. y. z.

addressed letters of condolence to his son, whose reception of Mr. Churchill during our visit to Nejed was reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 14, Persian Gulf series, of this day last year, and I have thought it judicious also to send him a few lines of sympathy through the British Vice-Consul at Kerbela.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 42.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne, (Received February 4.)

(No. 240. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, December 31, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that a few days ago, in view of an expected demonstration by discontented mollahs and mullahs against a proposed new stamp tax, ball cartridge was served out to the troops of the Tehran garrison, and the guard at the Palace was doubled. This occasioned a rumour that the Shah was dead or dying, and on the 29th instant a large crowd collected round the Palace. His Majesty was very indignant, and exclaimed, in the hearing of a number of courtiers, "This is the work of the accursed Russian Minister" (M. de Speyer, who has just arrived); "no sooner does he set foot in the country than intrigues recommence. He thinks he will get his Atabeg back again, but if I recall the Atabeg it will only be to cut off his head."

This afternoon, in order to mark his confidence in the present Grand Vizier, the Shah went to his house, where a lunch, followed by a reception, which was attended by the Court and all the Ministers, was given in His Majesty's honour, and a present made to him by his Highness of about 1,000. At this reception the Shah delivered a speech, a somewhat unusual thing for him, declaring his confidence in the Amir-i-Dowleh, whom he described as his own pupil in the methods of Government, and threatened all persons who intrigued or spoke against him with punishment. He has recently presented his Highness with a mark of his confidence in the form of an autograph, which now hangs framed in a place of honour in the Grand Vizier's house. This curious document says that the Shah's fullest affection is given to those Ministers who (unlike the Atabeg) have held office only under himself, and not under his predecessor, and then compares the Amir-i-Dowleh to a virgin, whose pure life has been bestowed on no other lord.

The Shah is extremely capricious, and both the Amir-i-Dowleh and the Atabeg-i-Azam have been the objects at different times of "cancellation" (harsh reprimand), but the incidents above reported would appear to show that, despite the Amir-i-Dowleh's undoubted unpopularity with large and influential sections of the Persian public, his Highness retains for the present the unshaken confidence of his Sovereign.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 43.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne, (Received February 4.)

(No. 3.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 3, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Alexis Nicolaievitch de Speyer, who has succeeded the late M. Vlassoff as Russian Minister at this Court, landed, accompanied by his wife and family, on the 20th ultimo, at Enzeli, to assume his new duties, and arrived at Tehran on Christmas Day. He was received two days later for the presentation of his letters by the Shah, and paid his official calls on his Diplomatic colleagues yesterday.

It would appear that M. de Speyer intends to adopt towards the Persians a more conciliatory method than that pursued, under instructions from St. Petersburg, by his predecessor. An "incident" occurred at Enzeli which M. Vlassoff would certainly have resented. M. Naus, who had arrived a few hours previously, took possession of the Shah's yacht, which is usually placed at the disposal of a foreign Representative, and the Russian Minister was obliged to enter the harbour and to land from an ordinary steam-launch. He replied, however, very politely to the apologies of the Persian officials sent to meet him, that he was so happy to be again

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on Persian soil and among his Persian friends that he would gladly have performed the whole journey in a common rowing-boat.

On arrival at Resht he invested, by command of the Emperor of Russia, the Governor-General of Ghilan, His Royal Highness the Prince Azad-es-Sultan, the fourth son of His Majesty the Shah, a young Prince who has hitherto evinced English rather than Russian sympathies, with the Grand Cross of the White Eagle, and his Vazir with the First Class of the Order of St. Anne, in the hope, no doubt, of enlisting their assistance in support of Russian interests and prestige in Ghilan, where these have, as already reported, somewhat suffered as a consequence of the war.

His Majesty's Acting Consul at Resht called by my instructions, on M. and Madame de Speyer, and was very courteously received by them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 44.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 4. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 4, 1905.

IN the course of a visit which M. Naus paid me to-day, his Excellency mentioned that he had by the Grand Vizier's orders instructed Herr van Roggen, as soon as the engineer expected at Ahwaz from India arrived there, to show him in confidence all his plans, and to discuss the proposed irrigation works with him. M. Naus, who has just returned from Egypt in an enthusiastic frame of mind about the achievements of the Irrigation Department there, seemed rather more optimistic than when we last discussed the feasibility of the Karun project. He fully agreed with me that it would be necessary to insist, if any money were advanced for the purpose, on sufficient guarantees for a proper control of the expenditure. I told him that your Lordship had absolutely declined to lend any for the Shah's journey to Europe, and he said that he should urge the Grand Vizier to draw the funds required for this latter purpose from the Shah's private treasury or gold reserve, and would impress upon him that the affectation to it of the ordinary revenues would produce a most deplorable impression upon the Governments of Great Britain and Russia, both of which had lent money to Persia for the object of restoring in their respective interests the financial equilibrium of the State.

In reply to an inquiry by me as to the general financial situation, M. Naus stated that the new arrangements for the payment of the malial were working smoothly, and that the Provincial Governors, with the single exception of the Valiahid were paying the taxes regularly and satisfactorily into the Treasury. He promised to let me have some definite figures shortly, and observed that he regarded the outlook as hopeful, that there was no actual deficit as far as this year's accounts were concerned, but that the deficit left by the Atabeg-i-Azam had not yet been able to be filled up owing to (1) the loss entailed by the cholera epidemic, and (2) to the depreciation of the kran owing to the effects of the war on trade with Russia, and on the exchange which had increased by 100,000 tomans, or about 20,000*l.*, the amount of interest now due on the Russian loans. On my remarking that the Persian Government had now taken advantage of its Treaty right to raise its duties by 10 per cent., he replied that this measure would only come into operation this month, and that he had refused to sanction it at an earlier date, when the proposal was made here and telegraphed to him in Europe, because if he had done so, the effect would have been so injurious to the interests of British as compared with Russian importers, that he would have been violently attacked in England. "J'aurais été lapidé en Angleterre," he said.

His Excellency mentioned that while in Egypt he had been very anxious to meet Lord Curzon, who was, so he had learned at Cairo, expected to arrive in the Suez Canal at the end of November last, so as to have a full and frank talk with him as to the alleged unfriendly partizanship of his administration as against Indian interests. He had telegraphed to Port Said to endeavour to arrange an interview with the Viceroy, but his message had unfortunately arrived just too late, his Excellency's ship having already left for India.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 45.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

THERE has been of late a certain amount of talk in official circles here about the advisability of the conclusion by Persia of Arbitration Treaties, of the kind now becoming fairly common, with foreign Powers, or at least with Great Britain, Russia, and Turkey, whose territories are coterminous with hers, and although I have no reason for anticipating that this talk will crystallize into any definite suggestions in the immediate present, I think it possible from hints which have reached me that I may be sounded as to the view which His Majesty's Government would take of such a proposal if made to it.

I should be grateful, therefore, if your Lordship would do me the honour of instructing me as to the language I should hold should the matter be mentioned to me officially. I presume that, whilst approving of arbitration as a general principle, His Majesty's Government would, especially in dealing with a backward Oriental country like this, where the use of force has occasionally to be threatened, be unwilling to limit its freedom of action by any obligations which were not equally recognized, and in a similar formal manner, by Persia's other neighbours, and especially by Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 46.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 6.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report, in continuation of my despatch No. 234 of the 29th ultimo, that I sent Abbas Kuli Khan on the 3rd instant to inquire of the Grand Vizier whether he could give me, in time for to-morrow's messenger, the reply he had promised after seeing the Ala-es-Sultaneh respecting the position of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk. I instructed him to tell his Highness that I was sending your Lordship a report of my conversation with him, which he could read to him if he wished, so as to make sure that I had correctly reported his language, but that I should be very glad if I could add to this report an assurance that the Persian Government had seen its way to acquiesce in the views which your Lordship had ordered me to express.

I inclose herewith a Report by Abbas Kuli Khan of his interview with the Aiu-ed-Dowleh. My impression is that the Hashmat's reinstatement in the Governorship of Seistan may eventually be obtained by us with great pressure, but that no definite decision as to his deposition or retention will be taken till within a few weeks of the Persian New Year's Day (the 21st March), when appointments to provincial Governments are renewed and the payments for their renewal made.

My telegram No. 2 of to-day's date will have given your Lordship my general views as to the questions raised by that sent by the Government of India to Mr. Secretary Brodrick on the 3rd instant, and repeated by it to His Majesty's Legation here.

The Hashmat-ul-Mulk's importance to us has always appeared to me to have been overrated by our successive Consuls in Seistan, for apart from the fact that he is personally a weak Ruler, the maintenance of his authority depends so entirely upon the good-will of the British Government that he is incapable of pursuing a really independent policy to our advantage. A Chief like the Sheikh of Mohammerah is a valuable ally, and I would go any lengths in supporting him, because locally he is stronger than the Shah, and cannot easily be unseated by him. But no finger would be raised in Seistan or Kain to prevent the deposition by a Tehran official of either the Hashmat or the Shankat-ul-Mulk, much less the paralysis of their authority by the association with them of such persons as the Yamin-i-Nizam, who would be the real though not the nominal administrators. Whilst, therefore, I have, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions and to the views expressed by the Government of India, repeatedly staved off by representations to the Persian Government the deposition of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, I have urged on His Majesty's Government, as your Lordship will see by reference to my despatch No. 115 of the 30th July, 1903, the inexpediency of our

identifying ourselves too closely with him unless it was clearly understood that our support of him would, if necessary, be material as well as moral. We have, however, gone so far on his behalf that we can hardly drop him now altogether, or sacrifice his interests without some loss of prestige, and I think that if we decide to cease to press, in return for some other concession, for his reinstatement in Seistan proper, we ought to try to get him some other Governorship, *e.g.*, Kain and Birjand, from which the Shaukat-ul-Mulk has been dismissed, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of the Russian Legation and his own offer of a large bribe to the Prime Minister. It might be easier for us to obtain for him Kain, where no one could contend that he had much chance of betraying Persian frontier interests for English gold, than Seistan proper. But if he is restored to his old Governorship, though we shall have vindicated our power to make good our assurances of support and therefore our prestige, we must not, I think, expect that he will be in a position to show his gratitude by serving our interests to any appreciable extent. He will remain an object of suspicion to the Court of Tehran and will be watched and checked at every instant by its other agents, many of whom are personal enemies bent on rising by his ruin. If we support him, and I think we ought at least to secure that he is not made to suffer for our friendship, it must be because we have encouraged him to hope for such support in the past, and have held strong language in that sense to the Persian Government, whilst fully realizing that unless we are ready to maintain him in his seat by the use, in the last resort, of force, his political value to us will be but slender.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Memorandum.

BY your instructions I read last night to the Grand Vizier the second part of your despatch to Lord Lansdowne regarding Seistan and the Hashmat-ul-Mulk. His Highness said it was exactly what passed between you and him in your last interview.

In reading your despatch, when I reached the sentence, "He assured me that his attitude towards Seistan affairs was not due to any Russian inspiration," his Highness said, "God knows that it is a true fact."

When I finished reading, his Highness said that he had not yet been able to discuss the matter with the Akas-Sultaneh, and he might be unable to do so before the departure of our courier, but he wished me to renew to you most emphatically the assurance that whatever steps the Persian Government may take in Seistan will be to the interest of His Majesty's Government, though he cannot promise to send back the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, who is a most incapable person to be left in charge of a frontier district of great importance.

His Highness informed me that Mohammed Ibrahim Khan, brother of the Shaukat-ul-Mulk, to whom he referred in his last interview with you, has arrived in Tehran.

In the course of conversation his Highness referred to the Rukn-ed-Dowleh, and said last year the Persian Government were merely contemplating his recall, but as soon as the Russians interceded for him, the Government decided to recall him.*

(Signed) ABBAS KULI.

January 4, 1905.

No. 47.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 153 of the 24th of November, 1904, I have the honour to transmit herewith a Memorandum by Mr. Lindsay on the nature of the proceedings of the Tehran Sanitary Council.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

* This, I believe, is true.—A. H. H.

Inclosure in No. 47.

Memorandum.

THE Tehran Sanitary Council has been holding regular monthly meetings since its institution last summer during the cholera epidemic. Its leading spirits are Dr. Schneider its President, and Dr. Obermayer, Delegate of the Ottoman Sanitary Board. The latter is full of sanguine hopes of reform; he has only been six months in Persia, and has not yet realized the incompetence and lack of enterprise of the Persian Government. The former has no illusions as to the capabilities of the Persian Government, but finds that his position as President of the Board flatters his personal vanity and hopes that it may forward his personal ambitions.

The Board as at present constituted is of no practical utility. In spite of repeated demands to the Grand Vizier, it has failed to obtain the allocation to itself of any regular budget, however small; and as it has no executive under it of any sort, it has to confine itself to making recommendations to the higher authorities, which may or may not be carried out, but as a matter of fact, never are. At every meeting numbers of letters from the President to various officials are read out; most receive no answers; some are answered verbally, and a few written promises have been given, but nothing is done in any case.

The Council's recommendations have on the whole been sound, and chiefly confined to the town of Tehran itself—such as proposals for the systematic removal of rubbish, &c., to some distance from the town, and the enactment of rules for keeping the water-courses in the town free from pollution. So far as the removal of rubbish is concerned nothing is being done. But when it was forbidden to wash clothes in the open water-courses, it was decided to construct houses where such washing might be done. The Shah, the Grand Vizier, and a few other people made donations to defray the expenses of these constructions, and it is believed that one has actually been begun; but in general matters remain as before, and the water-courses continue to meet all requirements alike, washing, drainage, and drinking water, while the public baths which are reserved for Mohammedans, and in which the presence of Europeans for inspection is resented, are in a horribly insanitary condition.

So far as the provinces are concerned, the Council has organized a system of correspondents throughout the country to report on matters in connection with epidemics. In this respect its recommendations are likely to be useful, as they would be carried out by the Customs Department, who during the cholera outbreak of last summer was given the general control of quarantine and sanitary matters. Thus the general lines have already been laid down for sanitary posts on the Kermanshah road, with a view to protecting Tehran from infection in the event of a reappearance this year of cholera in that region.

Some steps of a quite unobjectionable nature have been taken by Dr. Schneider and the Customs Department without consulting the Council during the intervals of its meetings; but the Council has shown no disposition to touch on any of the thorny semi-political quarantine questions, such as the Russian cordon in Khorassan or the British quarantine control in the Persian Gulf.

January 5, 1905.

No. 48.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 5, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a translation of a note from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Mr. Grant Duff, in which his Excellency states that the Persian Government has decided to impose on foreigners a tax on carts and carriages similar to that which has hitherto been paid by Persian subjects.

I ascertained from the Russian Chargé d'Affaires that the Russian Legation proposed to acquiesce in the imposition of the tax on Russian subjects, except in the case of carts and carriages regularly plying on roads for which a concession has been

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granted by the Persian Government to Russian subjects, that is, the Resht, and ultimately the Julfa-Tabreez-Kazvin and the Kazvin-Hamadan, roads. In my reply, therefore, to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, I informed his Excellency that I am prepared, subject to your Lordship's approval, to admit the Persian Government's right to impose this tax except on vehicles plying on roads for which a concession has been granted to British subjects, that is, the Tehran-Kum-Sultanabad, and eventually the Kum-Ispahan and the Ahwaz-Sultanabad, roads, or in which British are jointly interested with Persian subjects, that is, the Ahwaz-Ispahan road. I have also, as your Lordship will perceive, expressly stated that British subjects are to enjoy most-favoured-nation treatment in this matter.

Unless your Lordship considers that we have some ground for claiming for British subjects total exemption from this form of taxation, I trust that the terms of my reply may meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 48.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Mr. Grant Duff.

(Translation.)

November 11, 1904.

AS carts and two-wheeled carriages running in Tehran and its vicinity and transporting goods or travellers to other parts of Persia pay taxes at the rate of 5 krams per cart and 2½ krams per two-wheeler per month, and foreign subjects have not as yet paid this tax, and Persian subjects have complained of this, I have the honour to inform you that from the 1st of Ramazan the same taxes will be charged on carts and two-wheelers owned by foreign subjects.

No doubt the above will be notified to the subjects of your Government.

(Signed and sealed) Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Inclosure 2 in No. 48.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Your Excellency,

December 26, 1904.

WITH reference to Mr. Grant Duff's note of the 8th instant and to your Excellency's reply, I have the honour to inform you that I am prepared, subject to the approval of His Majesty's Government, to whom the matter is being referred, to admit the right of the Persian Government to impose on British subjects a tax of 5 krams per month on waggons and 2½ krams per month on two-wheeled carts from the 1st day of Ramazan last, provided that the said taxes are levied on waggons and carts belonging to British subjects trading in towns, and are not imposed on vehicles plying on roads for the working of which concessions have been granted by the Persian Government to British subjects, or in which, as in the case of the road made by Messrs. Lynch from Ahwaz to Ispahan, British subjects are jointly interested with Persian subjects.

On such roads British subjects must enjoy the same treatment as is accorded to Russian subjects in respect of the Resht, Tabreez, and other Russian roads.

It is, of course, understood that on these as well as on other roads in Persia British subjects shall continue to enjoy most-favoured-nation treatment, and shall have the right of claiming any privilege in the form of exemptions from taxation which is or may be accorded to Russian or other foreign subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 49.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 10. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia.

The language held by the Shah on receiving the news of the fall of Port Arthur was reported to His Majesty's Legation by an actual auditor, and corresponds with what I have heard from other sources as to His Majesty's sentiments. The Shah believes that the Russians will now make peace, and that the cessation of hostilities will enable him to visit China by the Siberian Railway at the conclusion of his European tour, a project which he formed, as I reported at the time, two years ago, and of which he often talks.

The general discontent against the Ain-ed-Dowleh's policy of retrenchment is very great, but I imagine that he will only fall if he fails, like the Atabeg, to find the funds required for the royal tour. The removal of the Sepah Salar from the political arena will, however, increase his Highness' difficulties, as the Sepah Salar would have been Regent during his absence with the Shah, and a trustworthy substitute will be difficult to provide.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Monthly Summary of Events not reported in separate Despatches.—January 6, 1905.

Meshed.—The question of the pay of the Russian quarantine cordon, mentioned in last month's summary, is still *in statu quo*. According to the latest report received (17th December), they had still received nothing.

Captain Yass, its Commanding Officer, has been on a visit to Meshed. He apparently wanted to be made Russian Consul at Turbat-i-Haidari, but the Russian Government would not agree, alleging that if a Consul were appointed there the necessity for the cordon would disappear.

The Shaukat-ul-Mulk is still at Birjand. The Grand Vizier states that he has actually been deposed; at any rate, the Muazzaz-ul-Mulk, the Representative of the Persian Government lately arrived there, has all the power in his hands. However, when the latest reports received here left, the Shaukat was still ostensibly Governor, the Persian authorities apparently fearing disturbances if matters were moved along too brusquely.

Brahim Khan, brother and heir of the Shaukat, came to Meshed, and has since arrived at Tehran. He is a mild, unsophisticated youth of about 18 years old, who has never before been out of Birjand, and is a complete nonentity.

A motor car and chauffeur, ordered in Europe for the Shaukat more than a year ago, has reached Birjand. It is not stated by what route it came.

Forbes, Forbes, and Co.'s difficulties in connection with their corner in wool are not yet quite finished. The latest case in which His Majesty's Consul-General's help was called in was that of the Afghan trader, Mohammed Hakeem, who contracted to supply 18,000 tomans worth of wool, and then proceeded to dispose of it for cash to the Russian Bank. Forbes, Forbes, and Co. intend to close their business at Meshed as soon as their rather large outstandings are collected.

One of the chief Persian merchants of Meshed, Haji Mohammed Ali Akbar by name, approached His Majesty's Consul-General to get information as to the Nushki route. He said that trade in English goods was more lucrative than in any other class of goods, but that the time taken by caravans travelling through Bunder Abbas or Tabreez-Tehran was too considerable. His Majesty's Consul-General was able to give him details as to railway rates from Kurrachee, the camel contract from Quetta, the rules for the recovery of seven-eighths of the duty paid in India, &c. The merchant said that he was proceeding to Europe, and would order 10,000*l.* worth of English goods as an experimental venture.

Slight recrudescence of cholera is reported in the immediate neighbourhood of Meshed, in the Khaf district, and all along the Central Asia Railway line.

Seistan.—The letter from the Ameer authorizing the Akhunzada to proceed to demarcate was a most satisfactory document, expressing confidence in the justice of the Award and approval of the Akhunzada himself.

The final demarcation by pillars of the Kuh-Malik Siah to Kuhak line was completed on the 18th November. On the 21st December Colonel MacMahon announced by telegram that demarcation up to Siah Koh had been done.

The Mustansir-ul-Mamalek, the Revenue officer from Tehran now visiting Seistan, appears to be a shrewd official. He estimates the revenue of Seistan at 150,000 tomans—probably not far off the mark. The Hashmat-ul-Mulk has hitherto paid a good deal less, and he or his successor will not get the government so cheaply again.

The Mustansir also desires to introduce tenancy rights for cultivators in Seistan. So far the cultivators have had no right whatever in their land.

Kerman.—His Majesty's Consul proceeded to Sirjan to meet the Commercial Mission sent to South-east Persia by the Indian Chambers of Commerce. The Mission appears to have been well received wherever it passed, and every hope may be entertained that the results it may attain will be valuable. Only at Bunder Abbas it encountered difficulties, owing to the obstructive attitude of the local Belgian. This has formed the subject of a semi-official complaint by His Majesty's Minister to M. Naus.

On the 16th December it reached Kerman, and was accorded a splendid reception by all classes of the community. It received the same "istokbal" as was accorded to the Russian Consul when he arrived.

Isfahan.—Activity among the Mollahs is reported, caused by the return from Kerbela of Mirza Abul Ghassem, the Mollah who started the Babi riots of 1903. He has been encouraged also by Aga Nejeft.

Tehran.—The Nayer-ul-Mulk, Minister of Education, has resigned his post and been succeeded by the Ala-ul-Mulk, late Governor-General of Kerman, and Ambassador at Constantinople. The Ala's first action was to demand urgently the sum of 7,000 tomans for repairing the Tehran College; this money has been given him. He has further demanded 80,000 tomans annually to provide adequate salaries for the staff of instructors, and 12,000 tomans annually for other purposes. This is under consideration. The college has received no funds for two years, and it was confidently stated a short time ago that it had been permanently closed; the Ala-ul-Mulk's demands, in the present low state of the Treasury, are not likely to be acceded to.

The Sepah Sakar, Minister of War, who for a long time has been seriously ill, had a crisis about a fortnight ago. A consultation was held over him in the presence of the Ain-ed-Dowleh, his half-brother, of all the European doctors in Tehran, fourteen in number. He was pronounced to be dying.

Meanwhile, he has got slightly better, and has now received permission from the Shah to go on a pilgrimage to Kerbela. He has made all his preparations to start immediately. It is quite certain that he cannot live for more than two or three months anywhere, and the only question is, how much of the journey to Kerbela he will be able to perform alive.

As to his successor, it seems to be practically settled that the army is to be divided into ten corps, each under a Sardar, with the Bodyguard under Amir Bahadur Jang, as at present, separate. The whole is then to be put under the immediate supervision of the Ain-ed-Dowleh himself, who thus will acquire another lucrative post.

The Persian Minister in Paris is to be recalled; the French Government have refused to accept the Saad-ed-Dowleh, Persian Minister at Brussels, as his successor, and are said to have asked for the Mofakher-ed-Dowleh, now Karguzar at Tabreez. The prime mover in all this is said to be the Head Moonshi of the French Legation, Mirza Ibrahim Khan, who acts through the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

The Governor of Hamadan, the Salar-es-Saltaneh, has been recalled, and the Yemin-es-Sultan appointed in his place.

The Shah lately received a letter informing him that the Salar-ed-Dowleh was intriguing with the Ulama against the Ain-ed-Dowleh. His Majesty landed the letter to the latter, who sent a special man to inquire of the Ulama. They all denied it absolutely. It is thought from this that the Grand Vizier will wish to get the Salar-ed-Dowleh out of Tehran this spring, and will appoint him Governor-General of either Khorassan or Kerman.

The Salar-ed-Dowleh is the fourth son of the Shah, who ran away early last summer to Burujird, and thereby got his debts paid by the Shah.

It was reported that the Government intended to put a stamp-tax on all contracts

and documents drawn up by Mollahs according to the Shar' Law between Persians. The Mollahs have always claimed that, as the Shah is not really Head of the Church, such documents made by Shar' Law cannot be taxed by the civil power, whose only function in the matter is to see to their execution. The Government, however, has always claimed the right to register such documents, and therefore to impose on them a stamp-tax. In the present case it was also stated that the Government intended to limit the authority to draw up such contracts to four leading Mujtehed, who were, however, to have the power to delegate their authority to others also.

The Grand Vizier has now denied the intention of the Government to introduce the tax, but there is little doubt that the matter was under consideration. It was this affair which caused some little effervescence in Tehran a few days ago, as mentioned in Sir A. Hardinge's despatch No. 240 of the 31st December, 1904.

Aga Seyed Abdullah, an important Mujtehed of Tehran, in conversation with Abbas Kuli Khan, referred to this matter. He said that the proposal had been made before by the late Amin-ed-Dowleh, and defeated by the Ulama, and that it had now been abandoned again by the Ain-ed-Dowleh.

With regard to the general political situation, the Seyed, who is not well disposed to the present Grand Vizier, mentioned that, what with the reductions effected in the salaries of public servants and the increase of certain taxes, especially the customs duties, most of which, he said, remained in M. Naus' pocket, the discontent was very general, and that even the Shah felt the Ain-ed-Dowleh's harshness, and was seeking an excuse to get rid of him.

On the subject of the Shah's journey to Europe, he said he did not see why His Majesty should be allowed to go, as the waters had done him no good last time, and his disease was incurable.

The news of the fall of Port Arthur was announced to the Shah in the presence of all his courtiers and officials, and he publicly expressed his sympathy with the gallant defenders. When, however, the room was cleared of all but a few chamberlains, he gave vent to great delight at the intelligence, and observed that really he was always glad to hear of a disaster to the Russians, who, he was convinced, were endeavouring to bring back the Atabeg-i-Azam, and were bent on ruining Persia, to which they had already done so much harm.

(Signed) R. C. LINDSAY.

No. 50.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 11. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith for your Lordship's information a copy of a despatch just addressed by me to the Government of India on the subject of the Mirjawa boundary question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 50.

Sir A. Hardinge to Government of India.

Sir,

Tehran, January 6, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a copy of a telegram which I addressed on the 1st instant to Colonel MacMahon embodying my views on his latest communications respecting the Mirjawa boundary, and more especially his demi-official letter to you of the 1st November last, as to which my opinion is I understand desired by the Government of India.

I had hoped before the departure of my messenger to-morrow to be in receipt of a reply from Colonel MacMahon, whom I had asked for his observations on this telegram, and it is possible that I may still receive one. I hardly think, however, that any fresh information which he may give me will substantially modify the view which I have expressed in the inclosed message.

[1523]

M

So far as I understand the situation, an exact delimitation of the frontier line laid down in the Holdich Agreement will not only not strengthen our claim to Mirjawa and Duzdab, both of which Captain Webb-Ware believed he could include within our territory, but will give us a line—the blue line of Colonel MacMahon's map—which would be less satisfactory than the supposed present one, inasmuch as it will, amongst other things, bring the Persian frontier to the very doors of our fort at Robat Killa, and perhaps to a point east of our present post at Padaha. Colonel MacMahon proposes, in lieu of it, a line marked in red on his map, which he does not believe he could induce his Persian colleague, the Yamin-i-Nizam, to recommend to the Persian Government, but which he thinks I might perhaps persuade the Ain-ed-Dowleh to accept.

There are two ways by which I might, I presume, try to carry my point. I might contend that the red line was the one really in harmony with the intentions of the Holdich Agreement, and trust to the ignorance and indifference of the Persian Ministers. Or I might approach the latter in a more straightforward fashion; point out that the text of the Agreement did not correspond with the known intention of the Commissioners, and ask them to agree to the red line, on the ground that the rectification involved in it though of no consequence to Persia, would afford a more satisfactory frontier, would promote good relations between the two neighbouring Governments, and might even be purchased on our side by some small pecuniary payment, or by a corresponding rectification in Persia's favour further south.

The adoption of the first course would, I believe, almost certainly end in failure. The Ain-ed-Dowleh would reply that he would refer the whole question for his opinion to his local expert, the Yamin-i-Nizam. He would probably, or if he did not, the Mushir-ed-Dowleh would, ask the opinion of the Russians; and both the Yamin and the Russians would doubtless expose and exaggerate the weakness of our case, and make the most of what they would represent as a perfidious attempt on our part to filch valuable land from Persia by misrepresentation. The net result would be to make the Persians regard the acquisition of the blue line, or of something equivalent to it, as a matter of vital importance to their interests, and to increase their already existing suspicions of our design on Persian Baluchistan.

The second course would be fraught with less danger to our interests, but would hardly help us to realise the objects desired. For disguise it as we might, we should be, in fact, asking Persia to cede to us a portion of territory which, however worthless and insignificant in itself, and whatever the original intentions of the two Governments, as distinct from the text of the Agreement, can be proved to be, *de jure*, a part of the Shah's dominions. "If this rectification is of no importance," I should be asked, "why do you wish for it? There is surely in that case no real need to revise the Holdich line, or to bring the text of the Agreement into harmony with the assumed but unproved intentions of its authors." I should be told that it was out of the question for the Shah to alienate, in the phrase with which he has already familiarised us, "one span of his territory," and that even if he were willing to do this, the certainty of a counter-claim by Russia for an equivalent would make it impossible. It might, of course, be feasible to obtain what we want by a corresponding transfer of territory to Persia further south, but I do not think it would be an easy matter to arrange.

On the other hand, the Persian Government is not keenly desirous of reopening the Kuh Malik Siah-Mirjawa boundary question. To do so will mean expense to itself, vexatious inquiries and threats of counter-claims by Russia, and the maintenance of the MacMahon Commission with what the Shah regards as the sinister possibilities attaching to the presence of its armed escort for some months longer in Persian territory. It is questionable whether the Persian Ministers know or suspect that a more careful demarcation would give them any territory over which they do not now exercise authority. The Russians, I believe, told M. Naus at the time of the Mirjawa incident that not only Mirjawa but probably also Robat belonged by rights to Persia, but I doubt if the Persian Government would spontaneously have ever raised or would now raise the question of a demarcation of the entire line from Pillar 11 to Kuh Malik Siah. They have acquiesced for years past in an indefinite frontier with Turkey from Mount Ararat to the Shat-el-Arab, and they would be quite content with an approximate boundary on the side of India so long as it was not proposed that they should make a formal cession of land which is by the letter of past agreements their own. It is therefore possible, and I think probable, that if we were to say to them that in view of the length of time for which the MacMahon Mission has been in Persia, owing to causes beyond its own control, we were willing to drop the reopening of the question of the ownership of Mirjawa, and to regard the so-called Mirjawa River as the boundary intended by the Holdich Agreement, which would give the Persians, if I am not mistaken, the land now occupied by their

Mirjawa Customs Station, and leave us the post on the other side of the brook or nulla at present known as Padaha, they would be content to regard the latter as settled. I have not been able to identify Padaha, to which, I understand, Captain Webb-Ware shifted his camp by direction of the Government of India in the spring of 1902, on any of our maps, for whilst a confidential transfrontier map (Sheet No. 14) shows a place called "Padha" to the west of Mirjawa and therefore further than the latter on the Persian side of the frontier, it can hardly be identical with an outpost on the east side of the Mirjawa stream or nulla. Nor have I a sufficient knowledge of local conditions to say whether the places marked in Colonel MacMahon's map as Bug Thana, Bedl Spring and Piran Ziarat, and shown to be on the Persian side of the blue line are, *de facto*, held or claimed by us. If they are, however, their occupation by us will probably be left unchallenged by the Persians unless the whole question is reopened. As regards Robat, it can, perhaps, be arranged locally, at some later date, when the talk about the revision and the real meaning of the Holdich agreement has subsided, to erect a boundary pillar at some point on the road from Hurnak, not too close to our Thana, say a mile or half a mile from it, in order to indicate, for the benefit of travellers and for the settlement of any uncertainties as to jurisdiction, the exact point on the trade route at which the two territories meet. This arrangement would be made as a matter of mutual convenience, and without reference to a line only verifiable with difficulty from the Kacha Kun to Kuh Malik Siah.

I might, however, state to the Persian Government that in return for a formal abandonment of our claim to Mirjawa, *i.e.*, the point occupied by the custom-house, and for the withdrawal of Colonel MacMahon without the reopening of any further boundary disputes, we should ask for the definite settlement of certain questions in Seistan, such as that of the export of grain and also for the permanent right to draw supplies and water from Mirjawa for our neighbouring outpost at Padaha. I could probably effect an Agreement on these lines, including, perhaps, a right of free supply from Duad Ab without the intervention of the Yamin-i-Nizam.

Colonel Douglas, with whom I have discussed the subject, agrees with Colonel MacMahon in holding that the whole Mirjawa-Robat boundary is mainly important in subordinate relation to Seistan, and that the acquisition of the red line would be valuable to us only in the event of the establishment by Russia of paramount influence in Seistan and Persian Beluchistan.

Since I sent my telegram to Colonel MacMahon I have received a repetition of the one from the Government of India to Mr. Secretary Brodrick of the 3rd instant, in which it is suggested that a satisfactory settlement of the Mirjawa boundary might be effected as part of an arrangement which could comprise a withdrawal of our support of the Heshmat-ul-Mulk. As to this, I think that the two questions might be treated in connection with one another, but I fear that any formal cession of territory which the Persian Government could be persuaded, whether by its own officers or by the Russians, was demonstrably its own, would be very difficult to obtain. An exchange might be possible, but a rectification, however trifling, to the detriment, or apparent detriment, of Persia would have practically no chance of success. Unless, therefore, we can make sure that the reopening of the question will give us a more satisfactory line than the Holdich one, we had better adhere to the latter, inaccurate geographically as it is, rather than run the risk that further inquiry will involve the substitution of the blue line of Colonel MacMahon's latest map.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 50.

Sir A. Hardinge to Colonel MacMahon.

(Telegraphic.) P.

January 1, 1905.

YOUR private letter of the 12th November was received here during my absence on leave. I do not think it will be possible to induce the Persian Government to accept the red line. They would be almost certain to consult the Russians and the Yamin, and, as a result, might insist on the blue line, to which we would most likely prefer the *status quo*.

I would like to suggest to them that if they treated us well in Seistan affairs, and offered us satisfactory settlements of the grain export and the Hashmat questions, &c., we would be willing to withdraw the Mission, whose presence is a cause of anxiety to the Shah, without incurring the trouble and expense, equally great for them and for us, of a Mirjawa delimitation. We would keep Padaha ourselves and leave them Mirjawa, making

the intervening stream the boundary. To mark the frontier line on the road a pillar would be erected between Robat and Koh Malik Siah. We should, however, require to draw supplies from Mirjawa and Duzdab, and would ask for a definite Agreement on this point.

If I tell the Persian Government that the rectification proposed is insignificant, they will ask why we attach to it so much importance. It would be injudicious to admit the weakness of our case, and any attempt to deceive them would end in failure and increase their suspicions of us.

I am writing in this sense to India, but would be glad to learn your views by telegraph.

No. 51.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 3rd February, relative to the proposed advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

India Office, February 4, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

February 3, 1905.

YOUR telegram of 31st ultimo. Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

We are prepared to agree to proposed joint guarantee, provided that Hardinge is satisfied there is no reasonable doubt that Hashmat will meet bill at one month from date.

No. 52.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 4.)

Sir,

India Office, February 4, 1905.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th January, transmitting a copy of Sir A. Hardinge's telegram No. 6 of the same date, which recommended that His Majesty's Legation at Tehran should be authorized to guarantee a loan of 2,000,000 by the Imperial Bank of Persia to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, to enable him to discharge a claim which has been made upon him by the Persian Government.

Having regard to all the circumstances, Mr. Brodrick, after consultation with the Government of India, agrees that the requisite authority may be given to His Majesty's Minister, on the understanding that any loss under the guarantee will be equally shared between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

No. 53.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 6.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in letters from the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta, dated 5th and 19th January, relative to the Seistan Arbitration.

India Office, February 6, 1905.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Colonel McMahon to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Seistan, December 7 (dispatched from Robat, December 10), 1904.*

DEMARCATIION of boundary up to Salgumi completed to-day.
Addressed to Government of India; repeated to Tehran.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

Extract from the Diary of Colonel McMahon, C.S.I., C.I.E., British Commissioner, Seistan Arbitration Commission, for the period ending November 8, 1904.

2nd November, 1904, *Camp Kohak*.—The Akhundzada's son-in-law brought news to-day that the old gentleman is immensely delighted with the Ameer's letter conveying authority to demarcate. He has been dreading the censure which generally falls on Afghan Boundary Commissioners, and the tone of approval which marks the Ameer's letter comes as a most pleasant surprise. He is coming in to see me himself and show me the letter.

3rd November, }
4th November, } *Camp Kohak*.—No news of importance.
5th November, }

6th November, *Camp Kohak*.—The Akhundzada, with Musa Khan of Herat and a small following, arrived to-day. I have often asked him to come and pay us another visit, and stay in our camp as our guest like he did in April 1903. He has taken this auspicious opportunity of availing himself of the invitation.

He paid me a visit in the afternoon, and read out the Ameer's letter. The Ameer therein informs the Akhundzada that he is convinced all possible justice has been done to Afghan interests, and orders that the line defined in my Award should be demarcated. The Ameer refers to me as his "revered friend." There is no indication whatever of any sense of disapproval in the letter, but the reverse, and the Akhundzada is greatly elated. He (the Akhundzada) says it affords good proof of his endeavours in all he has written to promote in the Ameer's mind increased friendship with, and confidence in, our Government. Personally, I am greatly relieved at this happy ending to a long business, for I know the risks which Afghan Commissioners incur, and have always done my best to prevent the Akhundzada's friendship to us being requited by disgrace and misfortune.

At the conclusion of the letter, the Ameer makes the first reference to the water question that he has yet made to his Commissioner. He writes, "with regard to the water question, about which nothing is said in the boundary Award, take care that the present Persian bund is not moved one inch into Afghan territory, and that no water which now goes to Afghanistan is allowed to go to Persia."

7th November.—I hear that the Yamin-i-Nizam visited the line of pillars between the Shelag and the Koh-i-Malik Siah. He took the opportunity of making a visit to Robat itself, which seems hardly called for, but I presume if asked why he did so, he would say that, from the boundary line at the southern foot of the Koh-i-Malik Siah

the shortest way to his camp at Diwan Chah was via Robat and the north-east face of Koh-i-Malik Siah. As I expected, the Yamin has not visited the boundary line through the waterless tract south of the Shelag.

8th November.—The rebuilding of boundary pillars on the straight line is progressing rapidly. The pace of the work is limited by the amount of water which can be carried. Some 400 camels are employed in this, which is all that our water-carrying equipment allows of. Most of the week has been extraordinarily warm for this time of year, the maximum in the shade going up to 98°, and the minimum to 65°.

Inclosure 3 in No. 53.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

December 19, 1904.

SEISTAN Award. Your telegram of the 5th November.

Sir A. Hardinge, who was consulted before leaving England, prefers draft B with your modifications of clauses 4 and 8 of preliminary remarks; but in 10 C he prefers to keep Kamal Khan, and would retain clauses 2, 3, and 4 of Award, as proposed by Colonel McMahon. The object is to strengthen the hands of our Arbitrator in insisting that Afghan works should allow Persia her one-third share of the water of the Helmand. Sir A. Hardinge would also modify clause 5 in the following way, so as to render the proposal more acceptable to the Persian Government. After "complied with," read "and at the same time, to avoid necessity of fresh references to Government of India and expense of special Missions a British officer of irrigation experience should be permanently attached to Consulate at Seistan. He will be empowered to give opinion," &c., the remainder of the clause remaining as drafted. The Foreign Office concurs with Sir A. Hardinge, and, subject to your observations, I agree.

Inclosure 4 in No. 53.

Government of India to Colonel McMahon.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, December 29, 1904.

YOUR telegram of the 15th November.

Following telegram from Secretary of State, dated the 19th December, is repeated for your information:—

"Seistan Award. . . . I agree."

Viceroy concurs, but wishes word "should" altered to "shall" in both places in clause 5 as modified by Secretary of State. You may now announce Award whenever you consider it advisable to do so. Dane is being instructed to explain Award to Ameer.

Inclosure 5 in No. 53.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, December 29, 1904.

YOUR telegram of the 19th December about the Seistan Water Award.

I agree to draft B, with the modifications now proposed, subject only to the substitution of "shall" for "should" in both places in clause 5 of Award. I am empowering McMahon to announce it at such time as he thinks desirable, and am instructing Dane to explain the Award to the Ameer. (See your telegram of the 28th November.)

Inclosure 6 in No. 53.

Government of India to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, December 29, 1904.

SEISTAN Water Award.

Following telegram from Secretary of State, dated the 19th December:—

"Your telegram, dated the 5th November. . . . I agree."

Following reply was dispatched to-day:—

"I agree to draft B. . . . to explain it to Ameer."

Papers were posted to you on the 25th November.

Inclosure 7 in No. 53.

Government of India to Mr. Dane.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, December 29, 1904.

SEISTAN Water Award.

Following telegram from Secretary of State, dated the 19th December:—

"Your telegram, dated the 5th November. . . . I agree."

Viceroy concurs subject to alteration of word "should" to "shall" in both places in clause 5 of Award as modified by Secretary of State. McMahon is being authorized to announce Award whenever he considers it desirable, and you are now authorized to explain it to Ameer.

Inclosure 8 in No. 53.

Colonel McMahon's draft Award (B), as revised with reference to the Telegram from Mr. Brodrick, dated December 19, 1904, and the Telegram to Mr. Brodrick, dated December 29, 1904.

Preliminary Remarks.

GENERAL Sir Frederick Goldsmit, as Arbitrator between Persia and Afghanistan, was called upon to settle the question of rights to land and water of Persia and Afghanistan in Seistan. He delivered an arbitral Award on both points in 1872, which was confirmed by His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and accepted by the Persian and Afghan Governments in 1873.

2. At the time of the above Award, the Helmand River had one main distributary channel in Seistan, *i.e.*, the Rud-i-Seistan, at the mouth of which, in order to divert sufficient water into this Rud, was a tamarisk band known as the Band-i-Kohak or the Band-i-Seistan. The Helmand River from thence onwards flowed in one channel past Nad Ali, and along what is now known as the Sikhsar into the Naizar and Hamun. In 1893, a large flood caused the river to burst out for itself a new main channel, which left the old one near Shabgul, and is now known as the Rud-i-Parum.

Various disputes regarding water between Persian and Afghan Seistan, which were caused by changes in the course of canals and in the course of the main river, have arisen since 1872. My inquiries show that these have until recently always been mutually and amicably settled by the responsible officials concerned on both sides, *i.e.*, the Governors of Seistan and Chakansur. These officials, who thoroughly understood each other's water requirements, have always shown great tact and skill in settling water disputes to the mutual satisfaction of both countries.

4. Unfortunately of recent years, whatever may have been the cause, and whether this was due to the change in the course of the main stream or to more strained relations, the amicable settlement of water difficulties has been found to be no longer possible. A series of small, and in themselves unimportant, water questions arose between 1899 and 1902, which, by reason of estranged relations, caused misunder-

standing and increased ill-feeling, until matters were brought to a crisis by further disputes arising from abnormal deficiency of water in the Helmand in 1902. This led to the present reference to the arbitration of the British Government.

5. The condition under which the present arbitration has been agreed to by the Governments of Persia and Afghanistan is, that the Award should be in accordance with the terms of Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award.

6. In framing my Award I am, therefore, restricted by the above condition.

7. Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award on the water question was as follows:—

"It is to be clearly understood that no works are to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the requisite supply of irrigation on both banks of the Helmand."

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in his capacity as the final confirming authority of that Award, after consulting General Goldsmid, further laid down in 1873 that the above clause should not be understood to apply either to existing canals or to old or disused canals that it may be desired to put in proper repair, nor would it interfere with the excavation of new canals, provided that the requisite supply on both banks is not diminished.

8. The above Award is so definite that it is unnecessary to make any attempt to define it further, except on one particular point. This Award provides that Persia has a right to a requisite supply of water for irrigation. In order to prevent future misunderstanding, it only remains to define what amount of water fairly represents a requisite supply for Persian requirements.

9. From the careful and exhaustive measurements, observations, and inquiries made by this Mission in Seistan, the following facts have been clearly established:—

(a) Seistan suffers more from excess than deficiency of water. Far more loss is caused by damage done to land and crops, year after year, by floods than is caused by want of water for irrigation.

(b) In only very few exceptional abnormal years of low river has any question of sufficiency of water arisen in Seistan, and then Afghan Seistan has suffered equally with Persian Seistan. Moreover, questions as to the sufficiency of water only prove serious when the spring crop cultivation is concerned when the river is at its lowest, *i.e.*, between the autumn and spring equinoxes, yet it has been ascertained that only in three out of the past 35 years has there been any serious deficiency of water in Seistan during that season. It is necessary, therefore, first to consider water requirements during the season of spring crops. Any settlement based on the requirements of that season will meet the case of the remainder of the year also.

(c) After carefully calculating the normal volume of the Helmand River during the period between the autumn equinox and the spring equinox, it has been clearly ascertained that one-third of the water which now reaches Seistan at Bandar-i-Kamal Khan would amply suffice for the proper irrigation of all existing cultivation in Persian Seistan, and also allow of a large future extension of that cultivation. This would also leave a requisite supply for all Afghan requirements.

10. I therefore give the following Award:—

Award.

1. No irrigation works are to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the requisite supply of water for irrigation on both banks of the river, but both sides have the right, within their own territories, to maintain existing canals, to open out old or disused canals, and to make new canals from the Helmand River, provided that the supply of water requisite for irrigation on both sides is not diminished.

2. The amount of water requisite for irrigation of Persian lands irrigable from and below the Band-i-Kohak is one-third of the whole volume of the Helmand River which enters Seistan.

Seistan, to which Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award applies, comprises all lands on both banks of the Helmand from Bandar-i-Kamal Khan downwards.

3. Persia is, therefore, entitled to one-third of the whole Helmand River calculated at the point where water is first taken off from it to irrigate lands on either bank situated at or below Bandar-i-Kamal Khan.

4. Any irrigation works constructed by Afghanistan to divert water into Seistan lands, as above defined, must allow of at least one-third of the volume of the whole river being available for Persian use at Band-i-Kohak.

5. To enable both sides to satisfy themselves that this Award is being complied with, and at the same time to avoid the necessity of fresh references to (the) Government of India and (the) expense of special Missions, a British officer of irrigation experience shall be permanently attached to (the) Consulate at Seistan. He will be empowered to give an opinion, when required by either party, on any case of doubt or dispute over water questions that may arise. He will, when necessary, take steps to bring the real facts of any case to the notice of the Government concerned. He will be able also to call the attention of either party to any important indications of threatening danger to their water supply arising from natural causes or their own irrigation works. To enable this officer properly to fulfil the functions of this office, free access shall be given to him by either side to the Helmand River and its branches and the heads of canals leading therefrom.

6. The maintenance of the Band-i-Kohak is of great importance to the welfare of Persian Seistan. It is possible that the deepening of the river bed at and below the site of the present band may necessitate moving the band a short distance further up the river. Afghanistan should allow Persia to move this band, if necessary, and grant Persia the right to excavate the short canal required from such new band through Afghan territory to the Rud-i-Seistan. Similarly, should it become necessary for Afghanistan to move the present Shahgal band across the Rud-i-Parium somewhat lower down that stream, Persia should (as has been done before) allow Afghanistan right of way for a canal through Persian territory from that band to the Nad Ali channel.

7. It will be noted that the rights to the Helmand water, which her geographical position naturally gives to Afghanistan as owner of the upper Helmand, have been restricted to the extent stated above in favour of Persia, in accordance with Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award. It follows, therefore, that Persia has no right to alienate to any other Power the water rights thus acquired without the consent of Afghanistan.

8. I cannot close this Award without a word of warning to both countries concerned. The past history of the Helmand River in Seistan shows that it has always been subject to sudden and important changes in its course, which have from time to time diverted the whole river into a new channel, and rendered useless all the then existing canal systems. Such changes are liable to occur in the future, and great care should, therefore, be exercised in the opening out of new canals, or the enlargement of old canals leading from the Helmand. Unless this is done with proper precaution, it may cause the river to divert itself entirely at such points, and cause great loss to both countries. This danger applies equally to Afghanistan and Persia.

Inclosure 9 in No. 53.

Extract from the Diary of Colonel McMahon, C.S.I., C.I.E., British Commissioner, Seistan Arbitration Commission, for the period ending November 15, 1904.

I RODE out to-day towards Deh Dost Muhammad and back, about 40 miles, and fixed the sites of four boundary pillars to mark the old main bed of the Helmand, at certain places where pillars are necessary to prevent future misunderstanding.

November 15, Camp Kohak.—I start to-morrow on another tour of inspection of the boundary pillars on the Koh-i-Malik Siah and Kohak line. This line will, I hope, be completed in a few days.

Inclosure 10 in No. 53.

Extract from the Diary of Colonel McMahon, C.S.I., C.I.E., British Commissioner, Seistan Arbitration Commission, for the period ending November 24, 1904.

November 10, 1904.—I rode out to inspect the new line of boundary pillars on the straight line between Koh-i-Malik Siah and Kohak. Went as far as Sur Daghal and back to Sena Rud, 44 miles, where I stayed the night.

November 17.—Inspected the pillars from Sena Rud to near Kohak, where the last ones are now being finished, and returned to main camp.

November 18, Camp Kohak.—The remaining pillars were finished to-day, and the boundary-line from Koh-i-Malik Siah to Kohak is at last completed. It has been a very difficult piece of work. The alignment of so long a straight line was rendered very difficult by the wind on some days, and by the heat, haze, and mirage on others. The building of pillars necessitated careful arrangements, as all the water for the building parties and for the masonry had to be brought from long distances, 14 to 15 miles. The line is now well marked out by a splendid row of fifty-one massive masonry pillars in a dead straight line, which in places can be seen stretching away in the far distance like a wall. Two stretches of heavy and high sandhills, one 8 miles and the other 3 miles wide, did not permit of demarcation.

Mr. Ward deserves great credit for the manner in which he has carried out a very arduous task. He and his building parties underwent considerable hardship during the one and a-half months the work lasted.

November 22.—We marched to Zahidan. I have left a guard of fifty infantry in charge of our supply depôt and surplus stores at our Kohak Camp, as was done last winter. These will look after the camp buildings, &c., during our absence.

November 23.—The main camp march to Gurg Ali, via Jalalabad. Accompanied by Mr. Ward and Captain Ramsay, I rode via Shahgul and Milok along the boundary-line to Deh Ali Mardan, 40 miles, and fixed the sites of several boundary pillars. Seistan villages are not to be depended on as points by which to define a boundary. In my Award last year I defined the line as leaving the Sikhsar between the villages Deh Gul Shah and Yar Muhammad, and thence along the Afghan Canal to Deh Hassan Kharot, whence it runs in a straight line between the villages of Deh Ali Mardan and Ali Jangi to Tappa Tillai, &c. The villages of Yar Muhammad and Ali Jangi disappeared bodily last year, and now I am interested to find that Deh Ali Mardan has also disappeared, and removed itself from Persian territory to Ganguzar, in Afghan territory. These trifles are immaterial when once the line is demarcated with boundary pillars.

November 24.—I fixed the sites of boundary pillars from Deh Gul Shah to Tappa Tillai, and thence marched to Reg-i-Mori, where the main camp arrived to-day. They crossed the Rud-i-Parium without much trouble, but one of the mess camels collapsed in mid-stream, causing the death of some fifty pigeons and the destruction of a large supply of salt beef which had been prepared for winter use. Reg-i-Mori is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Takht-i-Shah, and we are encamped here, on the site of our camp of last February and March, on flat, salt-covered, low ground on the shores of the Chung-i-Chahar Shahr. Owing to the Hamun being lower than last winter, the wide stretch of water alongside our camp is unfortunately too shallow for our boats, and the nearest water suitable for sailing is the Chung-i-Baringak, 8 miles to the west of this.

No. 54.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 9.)

Sir,

India Office, February 8, 1905.

IN reply to Mr. Villiers' letter of the 30th ultimo on the subject of the request of the Persian Government that a certain passage may be omitted from the note presented by Sir A. Hardinge to the Persian Government on the 30th August, 1904, respecting the meaning to be attached to the term "Fars and the Persian Gulf," I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to say that he concurs in Lord Lansdowne's proposal to authorize Sir A. Hardinge to reply to the Persian Government in the sense suggested in his despatch No. 229 of the 21st December, 1904, should they revert to the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 57.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne — (Received February 10.)(No. 12.)
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, February 10, 1905.*

MY telegram No. 153 of the 19th December, 1904, with regard to compensation for actual losses of Colonel Douglas and Mr. Larimer.

This demand will almost certainly be resisted by the Persian Government on some ground or other, as long as possible. Threat of stopping Jask royalty, &c., alone would induce them to yield. I beg to inquire if the Treasury would be ready to advance in the meanwhile the whole or some part of the amount to these officers. Mukteers, servants, &c., must be paid, and unless this is done they will be out of pocket.

No. 55.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.(No. 23.)
Sir,*Foreign Office, February 9, 1905.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 236, Confidential, of the 30th December last, reporting a conversation with the Netherland Minister in Tehran on the subject of the Kurun irrigation scheme.

I approve your language to M. Knobel on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 56.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.(No. 24.)
Sir,*Foreign Office, February 9, 1905.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 232 of the 29th ultimo, forwarding copies of correspondence with the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and with His Majesty's Consul at Resht, respecting the prohibition by the Persian Government of the employment of female labourers in silk factories by non-Mussulmans.

Your action in the matter has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 57.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 9, 1905.

WITH reference to your letter of the 28th October last, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran respecting Persian Gulf quarantine.*

It will be observed that Sir A. Hardinge does not consider that the question will be reopened by the Persian Government, and that he does not himself intend to do so unless under special instructions.

Lord Lansdowne would be glad to be favoured with the observations of the Secretary of State for India on this despatch. His Lordship proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the course suggested by Sir A. Hardinge.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 58.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.(No. 8.)
(Telegraphic.) P.*Foreign Office, February 10, 1905.*

THE Indian Government is prepared to give the joint guarantee of advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, referred to in your telegram No. 6 of the 28th January, provided any loss which may result be shared by His Majesty's Government.

Application to the Treasury is not desirable in view of the smallness of the sum involved, and we are therefore suggesting that if, in your opinion, no reasonable doubt exists of the Bill being duly met, the whole amount should be guaranteed by India.

No. 59.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 10, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, respecting the proposal made by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran that he should be authorized to guarantee an advance of 2,000*l.* from the Imperial Bank of Persia to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

In my letter of the 28th ultimo I expressed Lord Lansdowne's wish to be favoured with the observations of the Secretary of State for India on Sir A. Hardinge's proposal. You now state that Mr. Brodrick, after consultation with the Government of India, agrees that the requisite authority may be given to His Majesty's Minister, on the understanding that any loss under the guarantee will be equally shared between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

Lord Lansdowne sees no objection to authorizing Sir A. Hardinge as suggested. His Lordship is, however, of opinion that, considering the smallness of the sum required and the fact that Indian interests are primarily involved, it would not be worth while to approach the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury with a request for a guarantee from the Imperial Exchequer.

I am therefore to suggest, for Mr. Brodrick's consideration, that the Government of India might be invited to guarantee the whole sum of 2,000*l.* which it is proposed to advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, provided that Sir A. Hardinge considers that there is no reasonable doubt of the bill being duly met, and that they are convinced of the expediency of the course suggested.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 60.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 10, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,* reporting that the Persian Government has decided to impose on foreigners a tax on carts and carriages similar to that which has hitherto been paid by Persian subjects.

Lord Lansdowne proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the terms of the note which Sir A. Hardinge has addressed to the Persian Government on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 61.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 11, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 5 of the 5th ultimo, requesting instructions as to the attitude you should adopt if the Persian Government were to approach you officially with a view to the conclusion of a Treaty of Arbitration between Great Britain and Persia.

In the event of the Persian Government broaching the subject, it would be best that you should let it be understood that the idea does not, in present circumstances, commend itself to His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 62.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 13.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 12, 1905.

HASHMAT-UL-MULK. Your telegram No. 8 of the 10th instant.

When Government of India informed me that guarantee might possibly be given, I told Hashmat that I was of opinion that matter could be arranged. He had answered that, having received remittances from Seistan, he is now not in want of the money. Possibly this is correct; it would not, however, surprise me if the Russian Bank had advanced the sum to him, hearing of his difficulties.

No. 62.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 11, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, respecting the proposed appointment of a Military Attaché to the staff of His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed, which the Secretary of State for India is prepared to sanction, subject to the concurrence of this Department, and provided that the expense is divided between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

Lord Lansdowne notes that the appointment in question is strongly recommended by the Indian Government and Commander-in-chief, who are well qualified to judge of its expediency.

I am, however, to observe that an officer of the Indian army is already attached to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran as Military Attaché, and that two more Indian officers are stationed at Meshed as His Majesty's Consul-General and Vice-Consul. Half the cost of maintaining these officers is borne by His Majesty's Government, although their reports and diaries deal mainly, and, in the case of Meshed, almost exclusively, with matters primarily affecting India.

The question of appointing an additional officer to Meshed in the capacity of Military Attaché appears to Lord Lansdowne to be one of purely Indian interest. In view of this fact, and of the considerable increase in expenditure in regard to Persia incurred by His Majesty's Government during the past four years, his Lordship does not feel justified in approaching the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in the matter.

I am to add that if, notwithstanding this, the Government of India desire to attach an additional officer, either temporarily or permanently, to the staff of His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed, Lord Lansdowne does not, *prima facie*, see any objection to such an appointment. But his Lordship would, in that case, wish to give the matter his further consideration, in consultation with His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, who would be requested to furnish his views on the subject, particularly as to the form the appointment should take.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 63.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 13.)

Sir,

India Office, February 11, 1905.

WITH reference to Mr. Villiers' letter of the 26th August, 1903, on the subject of the scheme for increased Consular guards in Persia, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to request that you will draw Lord Lansdowne's attention to the telegram from the Government of India of the 28th December, proposing that, in view of an increase in the Russian Consular guard in Seistan to thirty Cossacks, the British guard at that place should be increased to a similar number.

Mr. Brodrick observes that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran is in favour of the proposal of the Government of India; but it appears to him doubtful, having regard to the petty nature of the increase of the Russian guard, whether it is necessary to enter into competition with the Russian Government by making a corresponding increase in the numbers of our guard.

Mr. Brodrick would be glad to be favoured with Lord Lansdowne's views on the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

No. 64.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 27.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 13, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 229 of the 21st December, 1904, on the subject of the request made by the Mushir-ed-Dowleh for the omission of a certain passage from your note of the 30th August, respecting the meaning to be attached to the expression "Customs of Fars and of the Persian Gulf."

I note that you consider it probable that the question will be allowed to drop, but, should the Persian Government revert to the subject, you are authorized to reply as suggested in the penultimate paragraph of your despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 65.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,* reporting a conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the Karun irrigation scheme and the Governorship of Seistan.

Lord Lansdowne proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the language used by Sir A. Hardinge on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 66.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 17.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 16th February, relative to the Central Persia telegraph line.

India Office, February 17, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

February 16, 1905.

CENTRAL Persian telegraph line.

Please refer to your despatch No. 2 of the 6th January. Government of India concurs in proposal contained in the second paragraph.

No. 65^a.*Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 16.)*

(No. 14. Very Secret.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 16, 1905.

A RELIABLE person has given me the following information, which news obtained elsewhere corroborates :—

The Grand Vizier has been persuaded by the Arfa-ed-Dowleh, though he showed some reluctance, to allow him to sound the Russian Government with a view to a loan to Persia. His negotiations at St. Petersburg have resulted in the offer of an advance to Persia by the Russian Government on account current of 2,000,000 tomans, which, at present rate of exchange, is equivalent to about 350,000*l.*, on the condition that Russian officers supervise the proposed reorganization of the Persian army in accordance with plan of Colonel of Cossack brigade; that contemplated engagement of Austrian instructors be cancelled, and that several new Russian officers be appointed.

Two latter conditions have been objected to by the Shah and Grand Vizier, and the offer has now been withdrawn by the Russian Minister. At the same time, Russian Bank are demanding that debts on account current, contracted by the late Grand Vizier, amounting to about 200,000*l.*, be paid at once. The Arfa-ed-Dowleh does not yet know of this last demand. Its object is evidently to bring pressure to bear in connection with Russian proposals respecting the Persian army. He will in consequence probably find his financial difficulties considerably increased.

No. 67 A.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 18.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 19, 1905.

MANAGER of Russian Bank has been sent for by the Grand Vizier, who has protested against the sudden pressure for payments, referred to in my telegram No. 14, Secret, when it had been understood that they would be diffused over a considerable period of years. M. Grube stated that he was acting on the instructions of his Government, but promised to refer the matter to them.

No. 67 B.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 20.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 21, 1905.

HESHMET-UL-MULK.

I have again been pressing Grand Vizier on this question, but he states that a final answer cannot be given for three weeks. This is no doubt owing to the fact that the Government of Khorassan, for which there are several candidates, will be changed next month, and the future Government of Seistan will be determined in connection with it. Ain-ed-Dowleh assures me, however, that Persian Government have not dismissed Heshmet. I have told his Highness that I will wait for three weeks more.

No. 67 c.]

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 22.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 21, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram repeated to India. Your Lordship's telegram No. 69 of the 11th November, 1904:—

It is pointed out by Captain Williams that he will be unable to control statements of Firman Firmah with regard to his proceedings, if he does not go on with him beyond the base, and that without having really done anything Prince may report that authors of outrage on Major Douglas and Mr. Lorimer have been killed. He requests definite orders as to whether he should not accompany His Highness further under these circumstances.

Three months' grace have been requested by Prince before attacking Direkwends in order that he may collect provisions, and we must, I think, consent to this delay in view of the reports I have received with regard to the state of his force. Persian Government have been informed that we cannot in any way be responsible for plan of campaign, that Firman Firmah and they must execute them between them in the manner they deem most fit, but that we must insist on exemplary punishment being inflicted on guilty tribe within the next three months, and cannot consent to postponements of an indefinite nature.

As is usual in this country the whole expedition is being mismanaged, as Persian Government are less anxious to pacify disturbed district than to discredit Firman Firmah.

No. 67.

*Foreign Office to India Office.**Foreign Office, February 17, 1905.*

Sir, I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, relative to the proposed increase in the British Consular guard in Seistan, in view of the Russian guard in that place having lately been increased to thirty men.

I am to inform you that Lord Lansdowne concurs with the Secretary of State for India in doubting the expediency of entering into competition with the Russian Government by making a corresponding increase in the numbers of the British guard.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 68.

*Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received February 23.)**Treasury Chambers, February 21, 1905.*

Sir, IN reply to Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 10th instant, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to request you to inform the Marquess of Lansdowne that, in view of the circumstances represented therein, they will not longer withhold their sanction for the charge to British funds (pending recovery from the Persian Government) of one moiety of the losses and expenditure (£72l. 14s.) incurred by Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer while travelling on the public service in South-west Persia—the other moiety to be charged against India.

I am, &c.

(Signed) VICTOR CAVENDISH.

No. 69.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 16.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, February 23, 1905.

It seems extremely doubtful whether a British officer should be associated with the Laristan expedition, referred to in your telegram No. 22 of the 21st instant, seeing that we are to have no responsibility for the plan of operations, and as there is reason to believe that they are being mismanaged. The presence of Williams might give rise to regrettable consequences if the expedition were to encounter any opposition or to miscarry. What are your views?

No. 70.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 24.)**India Office, February 22, 1905.*

Sir,

IN reply to Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 10th instant, I am directed to express Mr. Secretary Brodrick's concurrence in Lord Lansdowne's proposal to approve the terms of Sir A. Hardinge's note to the Persian Government on the subject of the imposition upon foreigners of a tax on carts and carriages similar to that which has hitherto been paid by Persian subjects.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 71.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 24.)

Sir,

India Office, February 22, 1905.

IN reply to your letters of the 15th instant, forwarding copies of Sir A. Hardinge's despatches No. 234 of 1904 and No. 6 of 1905, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to express his concurrence in the Marquess of Lansdowne's proposal to approve the language used by Sir A. Hardinge, on the subject of the Karun Irrigation Scheme and the Governorship of Seistan, in the conversation with the Grand Vizier reported in the first-mentioned despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 72.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 25.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 16th February, and his Excellency's reply, dated the 24th February, relative to quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf.

India Office, February 25, 1905.

Inclosure 1 in No. 72.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, February 16, 1905.

QUARANTINE arrangements in Gulf and at Kermanshah. Your telegram of the 27th October. In despatch dated the 30th December, 1904, His Majesty's Minister at Tehran deprecates our raising the question of the control of quarantine arrangements at ports in Persian Gulf; he considers it unlikely that question will again be raised by Persian Government. As regards Kermanshah, Sir A. Hardinge would be satisfied for control there to be left in the hands of M. Melitor. Exclusive control at that place could not, Hardinge thinks, be claimed by us, having regard to the action which he took last spring on the question of giving Russian doctor control there. Foreign Office propose that Hardinge's suggestions should be agreed to.

Inclosure 2 in No. 72.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

February 24, 1905.

PERSIAN Gulf quarantine arrangements. Your telegram of the 16th instant. As regards Kermanshah, we recognize the difficulties which, His Majesty's Minister points out, stand in the way of our claiming exclusive control. As regards arrangements at Gulf ports generally, we agree that it is not necessary for us to raise the question, so long as our control of them remains undisturbed by Persian Government.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 71¹.*Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 24.)*

(No. 25.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 24, 1905.

EXPEDITION against the Direkwnds. Your Lordship's telegram No. 16 of the 23rd instant.

I am of opinion that Captain Williams should remain at the base, for it will be impossible to control proceedings or statements of Firman Firmah if he leaves altogether. I therefore suggest instructing him to remain at Barajird and to go on to Khorramabad if base is moved there, supplies being obtainable at a reasonable rate, but not beyond, and to inform me if there is any difficulty with regard to supplies.

No. 73.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 20.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, February 25, 1905.

WILLIAMS should be careful not to participate in any of the operations of the Luristan expedition. His Majesty's Government concur in the views you express in your telegram No. 25 of yesterday.

No. 74.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 25, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith copies of correspondence, as marked in the margin,* on the subject of the attack on Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer while travelling in Laristan, and of the losses and expenses which they then incurred, amounting to \$72*l.* 14*s.*

The Persian Government are no doubt responsible in the matter, and must be held liable for the repayment of the sum in question. They do not, however, admit their liability, and it is probable that some delay will occur before the money can be obtained from them.

Lord Lansdowne considers that it would be undesirable that Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer and their servants should be compelled to await reimbursement during the whole period of the negotiations. His Lordship has, therefore, proposed to the Treasury that the actual losses and expenses incurred, together with the expenses and fees of the American doctor sent down from Hamadan, should be at once refunded to the parties concerned, pending recovery from the Persian Government; on the understanding that the advance would be made on behalf of the Government of India and the Imperial Government, and that in case it should prove impossible to recover the amount from the Persian Government, one half of the liability will rest with the Indian Exchequer.

It will be seen that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury have agreed to this proposal, and I am to express the hope that Mr. Brodrick will concur in the arrangement.

His Lordship would be glad of an early expression of Mr. Brodrick's views in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 75.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 30.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 28, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 234 of the 29th December, 1904, reporting a conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the Karun Irrigation scheme and the Governorship of Selistan.

Your language to the Aïn-ed-Dowleh on this occasion has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 76.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)(No. 27.)
(Telegraphic.) P.*Tehran, March 1, 1905.*

VICEROY'S telegram of the 27th February.

I can perfectly arrange with Persian Government for continued recognition of MacMahon's functions as Commissioner till settlement of Mirjavar boundary question, so that, as far as I can see, there is no reason why he should delay his water award.

No. 77.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 28th ultimo, relative to the Seistan Consular guard.

India Office, March 2, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, February 28, 1905.

SEISTAN Consular guard. Your telegram of the 28th December.

His Majesty's Government do not consider it necessary for us to enter into competition with Russia by increasing our guard to corresponding extent, in view of the petty character of the increase to Russian guard in the present instance.

No. 78.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.(No. 38.)
Sir,*Foreign Office, March 3, 1905.*

I HAVE considered, in communication with the Secretary of State for India, your despatch No. 9 of the 6th January last, reporting the decision of the Persian Government to impose on foreigners a tax on carts and carriages similar to that hitherto paid by Persian subjects only.

The terms of the note which you have addressed to the Afshir-ed-Dowleh on this subject are approved by His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 79.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 12.)

My Lord.

Tehran, January 18, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note which I addressed on the 12th instant, on receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 9th, to the Persian Government, respecting the compensation to be paid to Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and to Mr. Vice-Consul Lorimer for the outrage inflicted on them by the Direkward Lurs.

I have, at the same time, the honour to report that His Highness the Firman Firmah, after delays and endeavours to escape going, which necessitated repeated

representations by me here, left Kermanshah yesterday for Luristan. Mr. H. Rabino, who is on a visit here, believes that if he is supplied with the necessary funds, he may succeed with the forces at his disposal in punishing the offending tribe, but this optimism is not generally shared. I gather, in fact, from what I have heard in various quarters, that the failure of the expedition would be viewed with complacency both by the Grand Vizier and by the Firman Firmah himself, as the Ain-ed-Dowleh believes that defeat would discredit the Firman Firmah, whilst the Firman Firmah hopes that it would lead to his being deprived of his province, which will enable him to return, after his long exile, to Tehran and plunge into Palace intrigues.

Surgeon-Lieutenant Williams accompanied his Highness, very much, I suspect, from what I hear, against the Prince's wishes, at any rate as far as Khoromabad, which will be his base, and I have authorized him to leave Mr. Fairley, the Acting-Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia, in charge of His Majesty's Consulate at Kermanshah till the return of Major Gough, who will quit Urmia on the 16th proximo.

I had recently some talk on Luristan affairs with His Royal Highness the Salar-ed-Dowleh, who was deprived, as your Lordship may remember, of the Governor-Generalship of Arabistan last spring, but who has now been reconciled to the Ain-ed-Dowleh by the promise of promotion this year to Kerman or, if possible, Khorassan.

His Royal Highness was very sceptical as to any satisfactory result attending the Firman Firmah's operations, or, indeed, those of any other Persian General, in the present state of the country, "because," he said, and then, checking himself, added, "there are a good many because's, and you know them as well as I do, so that there is no need to specify them." He thought it would be wiser of us to abandon the idea of establishing a trade route through the country lying between Khoromabad and Dizful. The Lurs, he said, were so savage and stupid that they would always be tempted to sacrifice ulterior advantage for the sake of immediate plunder, and although an energetic Governor, such as the Ain-ed-Dowleh had been, might keep the road open for a few months or even a year or so, it could only be made permanently safe by a thorough subjugation and pacification of the country, a task which, under present circumstances, was beyond the capacities of the Persian army.

His Royal Highness believed that an equally good trade route, perhaps a better one, might be developed by the Persian Road and Transport Company if it diverged from the present route at Burnjird, and carried its road in a south-easterly direction through the territory of the Chahar Lang Bakhtiari, who, like the Bakhtiari tribe in general, were well disposed towards the English. In reply to a question as to why this road had never before been frequented by through caravans, His Royal Highness said that it could not be so used until a bridge had been built over the Abi Diz. I am making further inquiries on this subject.

If the Firman Firmah fails in his expedition, the only other courses which I can recommend to your Lordship are (1) that we shall insist on the Bakhtiari Khans being authorized by the Persian Government to undertake the punishment of the Direkwards, and for this purpose be given the Government of Luristan for a definite term of years; or (2) if this is objected to on the ground that such a measure would be resented by the Vali of Pusht-i-Kuh, that the Ali-ed-Dowleh, who has been successful in dealing with the Hyat tribes of Kermanshah and Pars, should be charged with the pacification of Luristan. He is of all the Persian Governors the only man I know who would have much chance of success, but he is now in disgrace as a partizan of the Atabeg-i-Azam. He attributed, in a recent conversation with me, the present state of anarchy into which Luristan has been allowed to fall largely to the perfidious policy adopted towards the tribes by successive Persian Governors, who had shaken all belief in their trustworthiness. They had invited Lur Chiefs to parleys under flags of truce, or after sending them as safe-conducts Korras on which they had sworn to keep faith with them, and had then arrested them as soon as they had got them into their power, or had them "accidentally shot" as they were leaving at the close of an interview. Nothing but a restoration of confidence by a straightforward policy on the part of the Persian Government would make it possible really to pacify the Lurs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Your Excellency,

Tehran, January 11, 1905.

HIS Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the reports furnished them by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires respecting the attack by a section of the Direkvend tribe on His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz and on the Military Attaché of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran.

They consider it reasonable that a liberal indemnity for the wounds and injuries inflicted by Persian subjects on the Representatives of a friendly State should be assigned to the latter in addition to the payment of the special expenses incurred by them, in consequence of this outrage and the value of the property stolen from them. I am instructed accordingly to request that the sum of 5000*l.*, or its equivalent in Persian money, should be paid as compensation to each of the two officers. It may be more convenient to the Persian Government to spread the payment of this sum over a certain period than to pay it in lump at once, and I am therefore authorized to propose its payment in five quarterly instalments of 100*l.* each to Colonel Douglas and Consul Lorimer respectively, the first instalment to be paid on the 1st April next.

I am at the same time to urge most urgently the importance of early and energetic measures, not merely for the punishment of the guilty tribe, which will doubtless be the primary object of the Persian Government, but also for the pacification of the districts traversed by the Arabistan road, the Shah's concession for which cannot be properly worked by the British Company holding it until reasonable security for life and property is established along it.

I need not refer to the numerous representations on the disturbed state of this portion of the Province of Arabistan which His Majesty's Legation has over and over again submitted both to your Excellency and to his Highness the Sadr Azam, and which have been answered to the effect that "the necessary orders have been sent" and "the necessary measures are being taken." Notwithstanding these assurances and promises, the reports which His Majesty's Legation has received from its Consuls and from Messrs. Lynch were to the effect that trade along the road was completely paralysed by the prevalent insecurity, and that it would not be possible for the Road Company to commence operations under present conditions with any prospect of success. The efforts which His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz has made with my approval to open up the road, with a view to securing passage for Messrs. Lynch's goods, and to enabling the Road Company's agents to give effect to their concession by means of payments to the Headmen of the districts traversed by it, have only been partially successful, and have now received a check owing to the outrage committed upon that officer, when travelling there in pursuance of this object, and upon Colonel Douglas, who met and joined him at Khoronabad, by the escort supplied by the Direkvents. It has thus become evident that nothing short of the severest measures will make it possible for the Road Company to realize its concession, and secure to our traders using the Arabistan route—the shortest one from the sea to Central Persia—the enjoyment of that protection for their commerce to which the Treaties between our two Governments entitle them.

It is obviously not for me to point out to your Excellency the best method to be adopted for pacifying this district, but I would venture to suggest that the Firman should publicly announce that his operations are primarily directed only against that section of the Direkvents guilty of the attack on Colonel Douglas and Consul Lorimer, and that other tribes co-operating with him will be rewarded. Further, that if the guilty tribe surrenders the authors of the outrage for punishment they will be granted an amnesty, subject to the payment of a fine, but that any of them resisting the Imperial troops will be treated as rebels, and, if taken with arms in their hands, shot as such. I would also suggest, for your Excellency's consideration, the propriety of imposing a fine of, say, 500 roubles. This practice is not unfrequently resorted to in the case of similar wild tribes by the British Government, and is found to be both an effective punishment and a guarantee for the future good behaviour of the offenders.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 80.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 18. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 19, 1905.

INFORMATION having reached me from a private source that negotiations were proceeding between the Persian Government and the Russian Legation on the subject of the Caspian Fisheries Concession, I instructed Mr. Churchill to ascertain their nature from M. Naus.

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of Mr. Churchill's Report to me on the subject, from which your Lordship will observe that M. Naus has agreed to desist, in return for a fixed additional payment by M. Leonozoff to the Persian Government, from certain vexatious forms of interference with the fishing industry on the part of the Belgian officials, which had given rise to complaints by the Russian Legation. His Excellency is further endeavouring to utilize this opportunity, in order to obtain the payment of a fixed sum for the next three years in return for a proportionate reduction of the royalties due by Leonozoff for the remainder of the term of his Agreement.

It may interest your Lordship to note, with reference to my despatch No. 149 of the 16th August of last year, that, as matters at present stand, the Caspian fisheries will yield nothing at all to the Persian Government for the next three years, so that the annuities on our advances of April 1903 and September 1904 will have, not merely in practice, but *pro forma*, to be paid by the Gulf Customs.

I may mention that on my way back here from England I travelled in the train from Rostoff-on-Don to Baku with the Chief Manager of Leonozoff's business, and had some talk with him about the present condition and prospects of the Caspian fishing industry. He complained very bitterly of the systematic persecution to which his employes were subjected at the hands of the Belgian Customs officials in Ghilan and Mazanderan under the pretext of enforcing the formalities of the "Règlement Douanier," a persecution which M. Naus does not deny, but attempts to justify, on the ground that it was necessary in order to induce the Russian Legation to agree to a revision of the Agreement in accordance with the views and interests of the Persian Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Memorandum by Mr. Churchill.

I SPOKE to M. Naus yesterday in accordance with your instructions about the new arrangement concluded by him on behalf of the Persian Government with M. Leonozoff, the concessionnaire of the Caspian Sea fisheries.

His Excellency said that he had that day signed an Agreement with the representatives of M. Leonozoff respecting the relations of the fisheries with the Ministry of Customs, which he described as a very advantageous one for the Persian Government. The fisheries had certain rights and privileges by virtue of Leonozoff's Concession, but as they interpreted them in rather a wider sense than M. Naus considered they were entitled to, he had instructed the customs-houses with which M. Leonozoff's agents had to deal to harass them as much as they could, and to restrict their privileges to the letter of the engagements as interpreted by himself.

M. Leonozoff had eventually been obliged to send representatives to Tehran to negotiate with him, and the result was an Agreement by which M. Leonozoff undertook to pay 5,000 roubles (500*l.*) a-year for the privileges he required.

His Excellency referred to the discounting of the royalties which had taken place in the Atabeg's time, and by which no revenue from that source could come in for another three years. This you reported to Lord Lansdowne in your despatch No. 149, Confidential, of the 16th August, 1904. He said that he was negotiating for a graduated form of payment by M. Leonozoff of these royalties, so that the payments which would in the ordinary course be made during about twenty-one years, but only coming

after the lapse of three years, would be made during the whole term under certain deductions, so that the next three years should not be entirely without revenue from this source.

These negotiations, however, he was careful to keep quite separate from those concerning customs facilities, which had been concluded quite independently.

Tehran, January 19, 1905.

No. 81.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 16. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 26, 1905.

YOUR Lordship may have noted in the Monthly Summary attached to my despatch No. 10 that the Sepah Salar's condition had been pronounced hopeless and that he had asked the Shah's permission to go to die at Kerbela. His Highness had made arrangements to be carried there in a litter which was to start on Friday last, the 20th instant, but on the previous Tuesday morning it became clear that he had only a few hours to live, and in the afternoon it was given out that he was dead, though he actually lingered on in a state of unconsciousness till early on Wednesday morning.

On receiving your Lordship's telegram, Treaty, of the 20th instant, I addressed notes conveying your Lordship's condolences to the Grand Vizier, the brother, and to his Highness the Seif-ul-Mulk, the eldest son of the deceased Prince, both of whom expressed to me, both verbally and in writing, their warm thanks. I have the honour to inclose a translation of the Grand Vizier's reply. I also attended with my staff, in uniform, the ceremony of removing the Sepah Salar's body from his house, preparatory to its conveyance to Shah Abdul Azim, where it has been interred, and deputed Abbas Kuli Khan to represent me at the actual funeral service in the mosque, and to place a wreath on my behalf on the coffin. The ceremony of the Levée du Corps was a State one, and was witnessed by all the Persian Ministers in their robes of office, but the only other foreign Representatives present besides myself were the Turkish Ambassador, with his staff, and the United States' Minister. The absence of the Russian, French, and German Legations was commented upon by the Persians as an indication of a coldness between the Russian and the present Persian Governments, but was really due to a piece of carelessness on the part of the Persian Foreign Office in not sending the invitations in good time. More significant was the abstention of several of the leading ecclesiastics, who are now agitating more openly than hitherto against the Ain-ed-Dowleh's administration.

The late Sepah Salar was by no means devoid of ability, but his dominant characteristic was an "auri sacra fames," surpassing that of his greediest countrymen, and his administration of the Persian army was disgracefully corrupt. He has left a fortune, I am assured by persons who ought to know, of over 1,000,000*l.*, most of which has been accumulated during the last few years, and so long as he continued Commander-in-chief there was little chance of a reorganization of the army. Whether this will now be seriously attempted, as the Ain-ed-Dowleh has more than once hinted to me, remains to be seen. Your Lordship will observe, from the inclosed Memorandum by Mr. Churchill, which gives a clear and, I think, correct account of the present state of the various parties, or rather coteries, at the Palace, that the Amir Bahadur Jang, Vazir Darbar, has refused the Sepah Salar's succession, and that the twelve army corps are each to be commanded by independent Sirdars, under the general supervision of the Grand Vizier himself. Four of these have, I hear, already been appointed.

It is reported in Court circles that the death of the Sepah Salar will compel the Ain-ed-Dowleh to entrust the Regency on the Shah's departure for Europe to the Valiant, and that his Imperial Highness' appointment in that capacity is being already freely discussed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

The Ain-ed-Dowleh to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Translation.)

Your Excellency,

January 22, 1905.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's letter of the 21st January, conveying the condolences of his Excellency the Marquess of Lansdowne, His Majesty the King of England's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the regret of the British Government on this occasion of the death of the pardoned Sepah Salar (may the earth lie lightly upon him!), and I have now the honour to express my heartfelt gratitude and thanks. I and my family will never forget this kindness and friendship shown by his Excellency, in accordance with unity and accord, and the share taken with my family on this occasion of sorrow and grief. The remembrance of the late Sepah Salar's journey to London, when he had the honour of being the Persian Government's Envoy at the second Jubilee of Her Majesty the late Queen of England and Empress of India, will always be a cause of gratitude on the part of my family. I specially request your Excellency to convey to his Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs the thanks and gratitude of myself and my family, and the expression of heartfelt unity and accord which we feel on account of the expressions of sympathy of the British Government on this occasion. I seize this opportunity to renew the expressions of my gratitude to your Excellency personally for the share taken by you in the grief and sorrow of my family, and the unity and concord without parallel which you have shown, and for the friendship and kindness which you have manifested, and I will never forget such kindness and friendship on the part of your Excellency.

(Sealed)

Sultan ABDUL MAJED (Ain-ed-Dowleh Sadr Azam).

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

Memorandum by Mr. Churchill on the present Conditions existing at the Court of His Imperial Majesty the Shah.

DURING the reign of the present Shah a strong tendency to form political coteries, or what we might call "parties," has been observed to exist in Court circles at Tehran. A nucleus is formed by one or other prominent courtier, having influence with the Shah, who draws around himself a coterie of followers, the object of whose political activity can generally be traced to interested personal motives, and who combine against the Grand Vizier in power at the moment with the object of embarrassing or overthrowing him and thereby reaping a harvest of vacant posts by either acquiring them for themselves or their friends in the reshuffle of Ministries or Provincial Governorships which they aim at eventually bringing about.

Such a party was formed by the Ferman Ferman early in the Shah's reign, which resulted in the overthrow of the Atabeg-i-Izam in November 1896. Subsequently the late Hakim-ul-Mulk pursued a similar policy, under circumstances which are too well known to need recapitulation, but his death and that of the Amin-ed-Dowleh broke up the parties of which they were the leaders, and the present Grand Vizier found himself comparatively free from political antagonists during the first year he held office after the dismissal of the Atabeg in the autumn of 1903. He has, however, during the last month been confronted with the gradual development of similar hostile parties, and it is interesting to note that his influence over the Shah is such that he has been able successfully to nip the growth in the bud.

The following list of the prominent Ministers and courtiers grouped and classified according to their relative positions is intended to illustrate the different parts played by each, as far as I have been able to gather from information supplied by a secret Court source.

Grand Vizier's party ..	Ain-ed-Dowleh ..	..	Prime Minister.
	Amir Behadur Jang	..	Minister of Court.
	Vezir Akhram ..	..	Private Secretary.
	Nasser-es-Sultaneh ..	..	In charge of Crown Domains.
	Ala-ul-Mulk ..	..	Minister of Education.
Independent Members ..	Muvassagh-ul-Mulk ..	..	Master of the Robes.
	Sec., Sec.	..	..
	Mushir-ed-Dowleh ..	..	Foreign Minister.
Fakhr-ul-Mulk's party (now broken up)	Muvassagh-ed-Dowleh ..	..	Chief Steward.
	Hajib-ed-Dowleh ..	..	Master of Household.
	Fakhr-ul-Mulk ..	..	Ex-Minister of Commerce.
	Seif-es-Sultan ..	..	Chamberlain.
	Naser Kington ..	..	..
Discontented ex-Pro- vincial Governors	Motamed Khaghan ..	..	..
	Nizam-es-Sultan ..	..	..
	Etesab-ed-Mulk ..	..	..
	Sec., Sec.	..	..
	Prince Jellal-ed-Dowleh ..	..	..
	Nayer-ed-Dowleh ..	..	..
	Zaifer-es-Sultaneh ..	..	..
	Majid-ed-Dowleh, Kajar ..	..	..
	Sec., Sec.	..	..

There is no doubt that Amir Behadur Jang is the most influential person at Court at present. He is day and night at the Shah's side, and it is an open secret that the Grand Vizier owes his post to his influence. He is head of the Shah's body-guard and commands a force of mounted troops which has always been independent of the Commander-in-chief. He was appointed Keeper of the Privy Purse about two years ago and Minister of the Court last year, shortly after the death of the Hakim-ul-Mulk, who held this very important office at Court. His influence with the Shah is great, and is perhaps chiefly due to the airs of religious fervour and even fanaticism which he has assumed, and there is no doubt that he sacrifices all personal considerations of comfort to his attachment to the Shah's person. His Majesty offered him the post of Commander-in-chief and title of "Sepah Salar" a day or two ago, that post being vacated on the 18th instant by the death of his Highness Amir Khan Serdar, G.C.M.G. He, however, begged the Shah to be permitted to refuse it, assuring His Majesty that his manifold duties at Court amply occupied all his time and that he could not bear the thought of being forced to leave His Majesty's side in order to attend to the onerous duties of such a post. He is undoubtedly wise to have taken this course, and has probably taken to heart and profited by the numerous examples of the prompt manner in which the Shah has forgotten and cast aside faithful servants and courtiers who have, for one reason or another, momentarily left his sight. The Amir Behadur is excessively ignorant in all but questions relating to the tenets of the "Shiah" persuasion. He is simple-minded and easily flattered, accepts bribes from his inferiors at Court for any trifling assistance he may be able to render them, and does not scruple to tell amusing though sometimes imaginative stories to the Shah on political or other subjects which he thinks may interest or influence him. He is at present very well disposed to English interests, and has used his influence in our favour on several occasions.

The four next persons on the list, Vezir Akhram, Nasser-es-Sultaneh, Ala-ul-Mulk, and Muvassagh-ul-Mulk, are all, like Amir Behadur, importations from Azerbaijan.

The first is perhaps the next most influential person after Amir Behadur, and with his three sons, Vezir Baghaya, Amin Baghaya, and Hajib-es-Sultan, conducts the Shah's large correspondence on affairs of State. His Majesty is very remiss in attending to this part of his business, and it is only with great difficulty that his four Secretaries can get answers to the masses of petitions, reports, and applications which accumulate in their hands on a very large scale. So difficult is it to gain the Shah's attention to these affairs for more than a few minutes at a time that important affairs requiring immediate attention are usually submitted in person by the Grand Vizier and Mushir-ed-Dowleh, who both attend at Court every day from 9 to 12, except Fridays.

Nasser-es-Sultaneh is the Ala-ul-Mulk's nephew, and the Tabatabai family to which they belong is a very large and influential one in Azerbaijan, where an ancestor acquired wealth and notoriety by farming Crown domains, and nearly every member of the family has some official or Court office. The Ala-ul-Mulk, who was for some time Ambassador at Constantinople, aims at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and is dissatisfied with the

post of Minister of Education, lately given him by the Grand Vizier, and a coolness has arisen on that account between them.

Muvassagh-ul-Mulk has thrown in his lot with the Grand Vizier, but his influence is comparatively small and unimportant.

Of the three independent members, the first Mushir-ed-Dowleh may be described as entirely selfish as far as his politics are concerned. He is at present exceedingly unpopular with his subordinates at the Foreign Office. The Grand Vizier is suspicious of him, and though he attends daily, except Fridays, upon the Shah to report upon matters relating to foreign affairs and to receive His Majesty's orders, it is probably only because the Shah and Grand Vizier cannot see who would be able to conduct his Ministry more satisfactorily to themselves in view of his long term of experience in the Foreign Office and consequent familiarity with the details of that department, that he has not already been replaced.

Muvassagh-ed-Dowleh is distinctly pro-Atabeg, and it is very noticeable at Court that he at present holds himself entirely aloof. I have, however, reason to believe that he secretly works for the Atabeg's return to power, and is on relations of a secret nature with Mr. Grube for this object.

Hajib-ed-Dowleh is reputed to be an entirely negligible quantity on account of his apathy and stupidity. He has so far taken very little part in party intrigues.

The Fakhr-ul-Mulk, whom I have placed at the head of a list of Chamberlains, was the leader of the party which I described above as antagonistic to the Grand Vizier. A Chamberlain himself, he has for long enjoyed the Shah's confidence, on account of which he was pushed into some prominence on the occasion of His Majesty's visit to England in 1902, together with the Seif-es-Sultan, a man of much the same stamp as himself. This group of Chamberlains had of late acquired a good deal of backstairs influence with His Majesty, and the whisperings of Fakhr-ul-Mulk, which returned to the Grand Vizier in the form of the Shah's criticism of his policy, became so intolerable that the Grand Vizier informed His Majesty that he must ask for the removal from Tehran of certain persons in his entourage, a list of whom he submitted. The Shah showed considerable vexation, and said: "You are following the example of the Amin-es-Sultan" (i.e., the Atabeg-i-Azam). The Grand Vizier, who did not attain his object at the first attempt, absented himself from the Palace for a few days, but was eventually sent for by the Shah, who asked to see the list, and after some petulant resistance agreed to the removal of the persons named, on condition that the Fakhr-ul-Mulk and one or two others should get Provincial Governorships. The latter was consequently appointed Governor of Irak and the Chamberlains of lesser degree were given other subordinate posts, and the coterie has thus been broken up and dispersed.

The discontented ex-Provincial Governors, chiefly Princes of the Royal house, attend upon His Majesty on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, when the Shah usually holds Court. A tendency on their part to intrigue against the Grand Vizier, presumably with the object of being reappointed Provincial Governors in order to be got rid of from Tehran, might have been observed during the summer and autumn, and the Grand Vizier rebuked them in strong but veiled terms in open Court, which has had a calming effect.

The Grand Vizier, it will be seen, is at the present moment master of the situation, though how long he will continue to retain the Shah's favour may be open to doubt.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL,

Acting Oriental Secretary.

Tehran, January 25, 1905.

No. 82.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 3)

(No. 17. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 31, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan respecting the journey undertaken by him last autumn to the Bakhtiari country, and his negotiations with the Bakhtiari Khans.

Your Lordship will observe from these reports that Mr. Preece considers the

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condition of the Ispahan-Ahwaz road to be less bad than he had been led to expect, and that he has concluded an arrangement with the Khans by which the latter undertake to pay Messrs. Lynch 3,000 tomans (500*l.*) for immediate repairs to the road on the 21st May next, and an annual sum of 1,000 tomans for upkeep. The Khans, however, ask that this expenditure should be supervised by a Representative of His Majesty's Government, or that they should be given the right of withholding the 1,000 tomans in the event of their being of opinion that the money had not been properly expended, and they wish to be informed which of these alternatives will be accepted by Messrs. Lynch. I venture to think that it would be best to adopt the first, and to arrange with Messrs. Lynch that His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz should be instructed to include among his regular duties a supervision of the annual expenditure on the upkeep of the road. I would, however, beg your Lordship to telegraph to me as early as possible, for the information of the Khans, the decision to which you may come on this point.

The very high charges, amounting to 375*l.* in three years, for the painting of two bridges, which Mr. Preece reports as having been made by Messrs. Lynch, would certainly seem to justify a suspicion on the part of the Khans that the expenditure which they are called upon to make good is not always as economical as they are entitled to expect.

I have addressed a note to the Persian Government, but have as yet received no reply to it, respecting the complaints made by the Bakhtiari of depredations on the part of the Isfahani tribe. His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz has also addressed me on this subject. Your Lordship will observe that Mr. Preece estimates at about 4,000*l.* a-year (at the present rate of exchange it would be 3,800*l.*) the maintenance of the road-guard of 200 men under seven officers which the Khans would be prepared to furnish, and which they would agree should be inspected periodically by a British officer and drilled by Indian non-commissioned officers.

Your Lordship will note, with reference to my despatch No. 12 of the 18th instant, the readiness expressed by the Khans to undertake the pacification of Laristan and the punishment of the tribe guilty of the outrage on Colonel Douglas and Lieutenant Lorimer. I have expressed to Mr. Preece my approval of the good work done by him in arranging, during the course of his recent tour, the principal points of difference still outstanding between the Khans and Messrs. Lynch, and in maintaining and improving the traditional good relations between His Majesty's Legation and this important and increasingly powerful tribe. I have also sent him, before myself replying to it, your Lordship's despatch No. 156 of the 13th December last, but the Ispahan post has come in to-day without bringing me the observations which I asked him to offer on the points therein raised, and although I had some verbal discussion, when in London last November, with Colonel Picot regarding them, I think it best to defer any definite reply till I receive Mr. Preece's views on the subject, as he has had in his hands, and is thoroughly familiar with, all the earlier negotiations connected with the road between Messrs. Lynch and the Khans.

I hope, however, to hear from him before the departure of my next messenger, which, owing to the interruption by heavy snows of communication with the Caspian, will not be able to take place at the usual date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 82.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 56.)

Sir,

Ispahan, December 28, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that I left here on the 20th October, accompanied by Major Cox and Mr. Graham, to inspect the Lynch road through the Bakhtiari country in accordance with your instructions.

Major Cox's proposal to accompany me was unfortunate as it necessitated my reorganising my plans entirely, and obliged me to return by exactly the same route as I traversed going; this was not altogether to be regretted, as I saw the road under two different aspects, viz., after it had been used by the tribes during the autumn, and

then on my return after four days' heavy rain such as I have never seen in the uplands of Persia before.

To give a detailed account of the road as constructed by Messrs. Lynch Brothers would serve no useful purpose; suffice it to say that the so-called Ispahan-Ahwaz road starts from near the western end of the Darkish-Warkish Pass, about 100 miles from Ispahan, then runs through the hills to Alwani on the plain, about 45 miles from Ahwaz. The road there constructed is, according to Mr. Taylor, about 145 miles long.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers and the Bakhtiari Khans look on this road from two entirely different points of view. The former, it appears to me, want to have and maintain a sort of Rotten Row in these hills—a road which can for the most part be galloped over; in fact, one of their representatives said to me, when speaking of the bad repair that the road was in, that when first it was made such a thing could be done. The Chiefs, on the other hand, wanted a road made which would enable the tribes and caravans to pass over freely and without danger.

I notice in one of their letters to the Foreign Office Messrs. Lynch quote me as saying that I estimate 5,500*l.* as sufficient to make this road; but my idea then was to make a respectable caravan track which would encourage Persian charyvaders to bring their mules on it and facilitate our commerce. It never entered my mind that the road was to be a good galloping ground for Messrs. Lynch Brothers' representatives and the few casual Europeans who pass through Persia and use the road in their progress. In passing over the road, both coming and going, I looked at it very carefully and took special note of the complaints of Mr. Barry. I could see nothing at any of these points to take exception to, the Chiefs themselves having made good the road in each case as far as Godar-i-Balutak in accordance with their promise.

Although had the road had a yearly sum spent on it, it would have been kept in much better repair, yet from end to end of it I saw but one spot which to my mind was positively dangerous, this was on the winter divergence near the top of Darkish-Warkish, where the road had fallen away leaving a precipice on the left hand, when going west, and a sheer rock on the right. I do not mean to say that there were not many other places which needed repair: Such as in the pass near Dopulum, coming from Ardak, where the hillside has slipped away; each side of the caravanserai at Shalil, where the road has been cut out of alluvial soil on the hillside; some of the approaches to the Godar-i-Balutak Bridge on each side; the Mahonir end of the Rah-i-Subani. Between Shalil and Deh Diz, going up to Mawared Pass, some of the road over that rock was very bad, but this is in the same state as I first saw it in 1895. From Deh Diz to Alwani some of the pass wants repairs. These are all the points which struck me as really bad from the point of view of a caravan road. The various charyvaders I spoke to with reference to the road made no complaints, and I was told at Ahwaz the same thing. To repair the road and put it into the same state as it was when Messrs. Lynch handed it over to the Chiefs would involve the expenditure of a large sum which, in my opinion, would be simply throwing money away. Such as clearing the stones away, &c.; most of the road is on or along hills which are a mass of stones or consist of soil and stones mixed; after heavy rains, such as I experienced, the latter becomes mud, mixed with stones, a large portion of which are left on the surface. After clearing away, the next heavy downfall of rain would find the road in the same plight. At other places where the road is practically all stones, the mules would kick them up again, and the travelling flocks always send plenty down from the hillside to augment the above.

With very much difficulty I have succeeded in inducing the Khans, firstly, to alter the proposal made to you, and in the place of giving a yearly sum for repairs of 5,000 kr. and a sort of corvée of 1,000 labourers (a system which I do not believe would work), to give Messrs. Lynch 1,000 tomans a-year for these repairs.

The idea of this change was given to me by one of Messrs. Lynch's own agents, and as it was to my mind reasonable I suggested it to the Khans, who agreed. Secondly, I have induced them to give for the immediate repairs of the road a sum of 3,000 tomans; this will be paid two months after the Norouz, when it is time to start work. As you will see by the inclosed letter which the Khans have written to me, the yearly 1,000 tomans will come into force when the road has been repaired.

I could not venture on any estimate for the road, but set myself to get from the Khans the most I could, and I venture to think that if this sum is expended on the road pure and simple a very great deal of effective work can be done.

The nearest parallel to such work that I have acquaintance with in this country

is a working party of the Indo-European Telegraph Department under an inspector doing repairs to the lines. The following are the charges which are sanctioned by the Government of India:—

	Rupces	Krans.
Inspector's pay, 20% per mensem	300	
Per diem charges	90	
	390 =	1,450?
Three mules, at 3½ krans per diem		315
Four mules, at 3½ krans per diem, for labourers' tents, tools, &c.		420
		2,185
Labourers, say 40, at 2 krans each per diem		2,400
Total for one month		4,585

At the above rate a working party could do six months' work and there would remain a balance in hand of 2,500 krans for purchase of tools and general contingencies, and, if that was not a sufficient margin, five months on the above lines could be arranged for, leaving a balance of 7,000 krans for above contingencies; as regards the yearly 1,000 tomans, by reducing the labourers to twenty, and cutting off one mule, the monthly expenditure would be reduced to 3,065 krans, which would leave a balance of 800 krans for contingencies, allowing for working for three months, amply sufficient I take it for any work likely to arise.

Over and over the Khans evinced the utmost distrust of Messrs. Lynch Brothers, and suggested that we should supervise the disbursement of these 3,000 tomans so that they might be sure that the money was expended for the purpose it was given, and they reserve their rights to withdraw the 1,000 tomans a-year, should they be of opinion that it had not been properly expended. I, of course, told them that I could not definitely accept either one or the other proposition, but that I would put them forward through you for acceptance; and I hope that His Majesty's Government will ask Messrs. Lynch to decide quickly, and enable me to inform the Khans whether their proposals are agreed to or not. Messrs. Lynch Brothers are not very quick in replying as a rule to communications from the Foreign Office on this subject, and during these months it takes at least six weeks to two months to get a reply to a letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 82.

Letter addressed by Bakhtiari Khans to Consul-General Preece.

(Translation.)

(After compliments.)

6th Sharnul, 1322 (December 14, 1904)

AS the newly-made Bakhtiari road, which has been brought into use by your friends who have the Concession of it, and by Messrs. Lynch Brothers, who are the overseers of it, although the owners of the Concession have spent a large sum of money over it, the road has not been properly repaired, and your Excellency during your present journey have carefully examined it, and have proposed in a friendly manner a further expenditure to be made by us; notwithstanding the enormous losses to us we agree to give 3,000 tomans cash two months after next Norouz, in the year Haail, 1323, to the order of the agents of Messrs. Lynch, for the repairs of the road and the removal of imperfections, so as to render the road easy for caravans to pass over it; so that Messrs. Lynch should repair the road completely in the course of one year, to allow caravans to pass. We also agree that if with the above-mentioned amount and in the time given the road is repaired to the approval of engineers, so that caravans may pass and repass easily and travellers express their satisfaction, and the repairs are complete, to pay 1,000 tomans a-year to Messrs. Lynch's agents from the year Yuntil, 1324, and thenceforth perpetually each year for the expenses of the repairs, and we leave to them the responsibility of keeping the road in perfect repair; but if the road is not properly repaired in the course of one year after the payment

of the 3,000 tomans Messrs. Lynch are to be responsible for the above amount, and have no right to claim the yearly 1,000 tomans,

These lines have been written as an Agreement.

(Seal of Sirdar-i-Mofakham.)
(Seal of Semsam-es-Sultaneh.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 82.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 57. Confidential.)

Sir,

Ispahan, December 30, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that when at Ahwaz Mr. Wilson, Messrs. Lynch's agent, asked me if I would try and get from the Khans their charges for painting the bridges in 1903 and 1904. I agreed directly, but when the note of their charges was shown to me I refused at once, and requested Mr. Wilson to consider the conversation as quite private. I was simply appalled at them. For 1903 the charge, to the best of my recollection, was about 450 tomans (80%), while that for 1904 exceeded 1,400 tomans (235%), so that with the charges for 1902 which I have just recovered (60%) the total charges for painting two small bridges, the longest of which is only 140 feet about, comes to 375% in three years, it appears to me that such charges are absolutely preposterous—with the knowledge that Messrs. Lynch Brothers had such charges hanging over the heads of the Khans I had very severe qualms as to whether I was acting straight towards them in inducing them to give the sum of 3,000 tomans referred to in my immediately preceding despatch.

In a country such as where these two bridges are erected, with little rain and a minimum amount of dew, a thorough painting once in a period of years would amply suffice; of course it is necessary that the roadways should be examined from time to time; this could be done by the yearly working party.

In the 1904 charges I noticed that Mr. Barlow's (the nautical engineer) expenses to Chikakhor and Mirza Fuzlullah Khan's, their Ispahan agent, to the same place to see the Khans were embodied. This certainly would appear as if Messrs. Lynch had had more communication with the Khans than the mere giving a binocular. (Vide your despatch No. 23, inclosing Foreign Office despatch No. 151.)

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 82.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 58.)

Sir,

Ispahan, December 30, 1904.

IN my interviews with the Bakhtiari Khans they were very anxious to know what steps had been taken with the Persian Government to procure them redress for the depredations of the Kuhgelus during the last summer. They said that either one of two measures were necessary to remedy the evil: firstly, to put these tribes under their Government as had been the custom until the Ala-ed-Dowleh had been made Governor of Shiraz, or else to give them the right to follow up the robbers, catch and punish them. They recall to my recollection that this right is given to them by their original Concession, to which we are a party, I believe, but owing to the Shua-es-Sultaneh being Governor of Shiraz, they do not care to exercise it unless it is confirmed by the present Government, as if they did take any action of such a description it would be certain to give cause of complaints from Fars to Tehran.

They therefore ask you to be good enough to press on the Persian Government this point, and get the necessary confirmation.

With reference to your despatch No. 13 of the 19th August with regard to the Kuhgelus, you are good enough to instruct me to open a discussion with the Chiefs as to forming a road guard under certain circumstances. In view of the clause in the original Concession granting them the right to protect their road, I thought that I

could with advantage open up this subject. I found the two Chiefs, Sirdar Mafakikhan and Samsam-es-Sultaneh, most receptive, and quite willing to entertain the idea. I made them to understand that I was acting entirely on my own responsibility, but that the result of my discussion with them would be communicated to His Majesty's Government.

They considered that a body of 200 men should be put on the road, and to command them there should be a sarhang (colonel), two yavars (majors), and four sultans (captains); they would clothe, mount, and arm these men, and would give the best they could. They would allow them to be inspected periodically by an officer from this Consulate or from the Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz, and they would be glad to have them drilled by Indian non-commissioned officers. To enable as many men to be made effective as possible, the men should be changed periodically and new men brought into the force.

As regards the arms and ammunition, such as they have they acknowledge is out of date, and for modern purposes ineffective; they would be glad to get 200 rifles of new type, with an equivalent amount of ammunition, if His Majesty's Government could induce the Persian Government to pass them into the country.

The expenses of this road guard would be approximately as follows; these charges they would expect His Majesty's Government to defray:—

	Kraus.
1 Colonel	10,000
2 Majors, at 5,000 kraus ..	10,000
4 Captains, at 2,500 kraus ..	10,000
200 men, at 1,000 kraus ..	200,000
Total	230,000

Or, say about 4,000% per annum.

This, I think, might be reduced to about two-thirds if the plan ever takes tangible form.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 82.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 62.)

Sir,

Ispahan, December 31, 1904.

THE Bakhtiari expressed very great concern at the outrage on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer; they said that they were willing to undertake the pacification of the Lar country and the punishment of the offenders, but that to do this they must have a guarantee of the Governorship for a period of at least five years; they would also want arms and ammunition. The amount of cartridges they now had would probably only last them for some three or four days in a stiff fight.

They complained greatly on the restrictions put on the importation of arms and ammunition generally, and the great disadvantage it places them in.

I found them in every way most anxious to do what they could to show His Majesty's Government that they were thoroughly impressed with the desire to gain the Government's confidence and consideration; they are much afraid that Messrs. Lynch Brothers may in some way make trouble for them with His Majesty's Government. They are thoroughly imbued with the idea that, as regards the road, that firm does not deal honestly and straightforwardly with them. This is patent by the contents of the letter, copy of which I have inclosed in my despatch No. 56. In their talks they use no unmeasured language.

I notice that during the last ten years there has been an enormous increase in their wealth and general well-being. They have taken every advantage of the sale of the State property, and have bought up every bit they could within reasonable distance of Chahar Mahal and round about the districts of Behbahan and Ram Hormuz. This latter has brought them into discussion with the Sheikh of Mohammerah, with whom they are not now on such good terms as they were, in consequence. If I might suggest a visit to them by Mr. Macdonall this spring, and a discussion with them and the Sheikh might smooth matters over; the enmity of these two tribes, friends of ours, is to be deprecated and removed if possible.

The Khans have all built themselves good handsome houses, well furnished according to their lights, have made roads and got themselves carriages, so that they can now visit each other in their villages with ease.

They also seem more contented, and one does not now see so many armed men about. From every point of view the tribes seem generally more prosperous and civilized. It is somewhat rare to hear of murders, and blood-fends are practically a thing of the past.

The Chiefs asked my advice as to getting an engineer out from home to make a road *à la* Bazalt to Chaster; they wanted this for the tribes in the bi-annual migration. I recommended that they should employ Mr. MacIntyre, a pensioner of the Telegraph Department, who now resides in Ispahan.

They also spoke of getting a doctor, an Englishman, to be always with them, either in the Gormsir, or Sarhad, and further talked of opening a school in Chahar Mahal for their boys; they wanted to have for this an Englishman also. On the doctor question they were very keen. I think it is most likely to be arranged.

In Arabistan, Bakhtiari, and Chahar Mahal, the rains this winter have been very heavy, and everyone is hopeful for a bountiful harvest; in every direction every inch of ground which could be brought under cultivation was being tilled and sown.

Although the Chiefs had promised Messrs. Lynch Brothers, and had repeated this promise to me, to do their best to keep this road open I am very much afraid that it is impossible this winter. I made them thoroughly understand that it was a matter of great importance for our commercial interests that we should have a quick and cheap mode of transit from the sea to Tehran and Ispahan, and for this we had greatly counted on the Bakhtiari road but it had been of little assistance to us owing to the dearth of provisions on it, causing the muleteers to ask as much higher from Ispahan to Ahwaz as from Bushire to Ispahan. They were very much astonished at this, but said that this was an unfortunate year, as in Arabistan there was a partial famine. They had put up a tariff in the various caravanserais, and given strict orders that nothing more was to be charged; if the charvadars were charged more than the tariff allowed, and would complain to them, they would have the culprits severely punished; they fully realized how important it was to do all in their own interests to make this road as popular as possible.

They asked in the event of war in Persia, and their services being required by us, would our Government supply them with arms and ammunition. I replied that in such an eventuality I had no doubt but that His Majesty's Government would do all that was necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

No. 83.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 18.)

My Lord,

Tehran, January 31, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the Annual Report which has been prepared by Mr. Grant Duff on events in Persia during the past year.

This period, during which it has been possible to form a fair estimate of the Ain-ed-Dowleh's system of government, has been characterized by a reaction against the *laissez-faire* and extravagance in domestic, and the deference to Russia in foreign, politics, which marked the last Ministry of the Atabeg-i-Azam and more especially the years 1900, 1901, and 1902. The Ain-ed-Dowleh has not completely succeeded in extinguishing the deficit left by his predecessor, for the cholera and the effects of the war on Persian trade have been against him, but he has sought from us rather than from Russia such foreign financial assistance as was indispensable to him in order to effect his purpose. His relations with us have never been as cordial or intimate as those maintained by the Amin-ed-Dowleh or by the Atabeg-i-Azam, during the period from Sir Henry Woll's arrival to the "Régie" disaster, with my predecessors, and his slowness, his suspiciousness, and his intense orientalisms have often made him most difficult to deal with. His great object seems to have been to eliminate all foreign interference in the internal concerns of the monarchy, especially in such matters as

the appointment of Persian Governors and officials, and to resist demands, in whatever quarter made, for commercial concessions, roads, telegraphs, &c. His ideal Government would probably be one like that of the Ameer of Afghanistan, and his policy may be summed up as the exclusion of European influence in any form as far as possible, with a certain preference for English over Russian, but only as the lesser of two evils. He has thus justified the forecast which, when he first took office, I ventured to submit to your Lordship in my despatch No. 150 of the 25th September, 1903.

The anti-foreign tendencies of the Grand Vizier have not sensibly weakened, as was at one time anticipated, the power of the Belgian element in the Persian Administration. On the contrary, it has somewhat gained in strength owing to the necessities of the Ain-ed-Dowleh's economic policy. He has recognized that without European officials the restoration of Persia's solvency, which is the first condition of her continued independence, is impossible, and whilst not perhaps trusting M. Naus as fully as did the Atabeg, he has given him a very free hand. The relations between the Belgians and His Majesty's Representatives in Persia have, I think, improved during the past year, and there has been, owing to the action taken by the Government of India on one side and by M. Naus on the other, a cessation of the constant friction which gave so much trouble in Seistan. The renewed efforts of the Persian and Belgian authorities to undermine the privileged position enjoyed by us in quarantine and postal matters in the Gulf ports have, in fact, constituted the only serious matter of contention between His Majesty's Legation and the Departments controlled by M. Naus. Minor disputes arising out of the attempts of those Departments to introduce European regulations and restrictions in a primitive Eastern country without providing the corresponding advantages and facilities afforded by the Governments of civilized Europe have usually been fairly quickly and satisfactorily adjusted.

The incidents of the war in the Far East have undoubtedly weakened Russian prestige, but have increased the suspicions of the Persian Government that we may be tempted to take advantage to its detriment of Russian embarrassments, and these fears, which the Russians have done their utmost to encourage, have to a slight extent qualified the satisfaction of the Court and governing circles, though not, I think, of the clergy and people, at the reverses sustained by the Russian arms.

As a whole, this year under review has been uneventful, and our own relations with the Persian Government throughout it, though by no means all that could be wished, may be regarded, when allowance is made for its unprogressive character, as fairly satisfactory, or, at any rate, as perceptibly improved.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Narrative of Events in Persia in the Year 1904.

AT the beginning of 1904 the principal Departments of the Persian Government were under the control of the following Ministers:—

Department.	Name of Minister.
President of the Council of Ministers	Ahmed-Dowleh. (His Highness was raised to the rank of Vizir Azam on the 24th January, 1904, and was made Sadr Azam on the 25th August of the same year. Both these titles may be translated "Grand Vizier," but that of Sadr Azam is the higher of the two.)
Minister of Foreign Affairs	The Mushir-ed-Dowleh.
" War	The Sepah Salim.*
" Customs	M. Naus.
" Posts	"
" Telegraphs	The Mukhtar-ed-Dowleh.

* Died January 1909.

The principal Governorships were held by the following persons:—

Governorship.	Name of Governor.
Azerbaijan	The Vadiabd.
Khorassan	Ruka-ed-Dowleh.
Fars	Ah-ed-Dowleh.
Ispahan	Zil-es-Sultan.
Kerman	Zafar-es-Sultaneh.
Yezd	Jellal-ed-Dowleh.
Luristan	Salar-ed-Dowleh.
Tehran	Ain-ed-Dowleh.
Kurdistan	Naser-ol-Mulk.
Gilan	Azad-es-Sultan.

During the last few weeks of 1903 and the first quarter of 1904 relations between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the Shah were somewhat strained in consequence of a difference of opinion which had arisen as to the responsibility for the failure of the Viceroy of India to land at Bushire during his Excellency's visit to the Persian Gulf in December 1903. The correspondence on the subject continued both in London and at Tehran for some months after the incident occurred. In a Memorandum addressed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to the Persian Minister on the 25th January his Lordship states that "it does not appear to His Majesty's Government that any useful purpose would be served by discussing the details of this very unfortunate incident Without wishing to impute blame to any particular individual, Lord Lansdowne cannot but feel that the main responsibility for the unfortunate failure which has occurred rests with the Persian authorities." In a further Memorandum, dated the 16th March, Lord Lansdowne informed the Ah-es-Sultaneh that His Majesty the King considered that, in view of the friendship existing between Great Britain and Persia, it would be a mistake to make the incident the subject of prolonged discussion. Further attempts were made by the Persian Government to continue the controversy, but they finally allowed the matter to drop.

On the 27th January His Majesty's Minister returned to Tehran from his tour in the Persian Gulf, whither he had proceeded at the end of October 1903 to meet the Viceroy of India. Sir A. Hardinge had, on his return journey from the south, visited Mohammerah, Ahwaz, Bagdad, Nejat, the oil-wells near Kasr Shaveen, and Kermanshah.

Shortly after his arrival at the capital, His Majesty's Minister was instructed to ascertain whether the Persian Government would permit the construction of a telegraph line between Nasretabad (Seistan) and Kuh Malek Siah. On the 16th March the Ah-ed-Dowleh informed Sir A. Hardinge that the Shah objected to the line in question, on the ground that it would create difficulties between Persia and Russia. What these difficulties would be did not at first appear, but the Grand Vizier subsequently informed Sir A. Hardinge that when the Russian Government objected to the Central Persian Telegraph Convention of 1901 His Majesty the Shah had verbally assured the Russian Minister that no northerly extension of the land line created by that arrangement, in the direction of Seistan, would be allowed. On Sir A. Hardinge's recommendation the matter was temporarily dropped.

On the 17th February Lord Lansdowne informed Sir A. Hardinge that His Majesty's Government were being urged by the India Office to insist that the phrase "Fars and the Persian Gulf" used in the Russian Loan Contracts of 1900 and 1902 should be interpreted in accordance with the engagement given by the Persian Government in 1897, that under no circumstances would the Customs of Southern Persia be mortgaged to a foreign Power. The India Office pointed out that the discussion of the "Règlement Douanier" offered an opportunity to raise the point. His Lordship asked for Sir A. Hardinge's views. He replied that he considered the discussion of the "Règlement" afforded the desired opportunity for settling the question at issue, but suggested that the British case would be strengthened if he could state, on the authority of a geographical expert, that Mohammerah was a port on the Persian Gulf. Lord Lansdowne, after making inquiry, telegraphed that the Admiralty hydrographer considered that Mohammerah was, like Bassorah, a Persian Gulf port, it being situated on the tidal water, and being reached by sea-going vessels.

To Foreign Office
No. 49, March 23
1904.

Foreign Office,
No. 14,
Telegraphic,
February 17,
1904.

Foreign Office,
No. 16,
Telegraphic,
February 28,
1904.

In a Memorandum addressed to the Ain-ed-Dowleh on the 8th March, Sir A. Hardinge pointed out that when the Russian Loan Agreement of 1900 was published it appeared that the Customs excluded from the guarantee were those of "Fars and the Persian Gulf." Unless, therefore, the word "Customs of Fars, &c.," were to be understood as an equivalent of the words "Customs of Southern Persia," the Persian Government had broken the written pledge given to His Majesty's Government in 1897. In his Memorandum Sir A. Hardinge reviewed the various attempts which had been made since 1900 to obtain from the Persian Government a definite interpretation of the phrase in question. He then stated that, "before authorizing me to accept the Customs' Regulations in the manner provided by the Convention of 1903, His Majesty's Government desire me to come to some clear understanding with the Persian Government as to the exclusion of all the three districts (Arabistan, the South, and Baluchistan), which, whether covered or not at the time by the term 'Fars and the Gulf of Fars,' are undoubtedly covered by the term 'Southern Persia' used in the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's note of 1897 from the actual or potential operation of the Russian Loan Agreements."

After further correspondence, in which the Persian Government attempted to avoid a definite settlement of the question, a note was addressed to Sir A. Hardinge stating that, in using the words "Fars and the Persian Gulf," the intention of the Persian Government was to exclude from the Loan Contracts all the ports of the south, and that they had thought this intention adequately expressed, in view of the fact that Sir M. Lurand, then His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, in his last note on the subject had used the term "ports of Fars." The note added that the Persian Government could not now alter any expressions in the Loan Contracts and interpret them without the participation of the Russian Bank, and if, contrary to all expectation, discussions were to arise in connection with this question they would have to be referred to arbitration. To this communication Sir A. Hardinge was instructed to reply that His Majesty's Government took note of the formal admission made by the Persian Government that it was their original intention, in using the term "Customs of Fars, &c.," to include in that expression all the ports of the south, but that His Majesty's Government could not otherwise accept the note as satisfactory. Sir A. Hardinge was to make it clear to the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government held them to their engagement of 1897. He was to add that, as it was admittedly intended by both His Majesty's Government and the Persian Government that the term "Customs of Fars and the Persian Gulf" should include all the Customs of Southern Persia referred to in the engagement of 1897, His Majesty's Government could not admit a solitary exception in the case of Mohammerah and its dependencies, or of any of the ports of Arabistan, and that they would take steps to insure respect for their rights in the event of any attempt on the part of the Persian Government to ignore them.

Foreign Office,
No. 121,
August 8, 1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 100,
Telegraphic,
September 22,
1904.

Subsequently the Mushir-ed-Dowleh requested Mr. Grant Duff, who was in charge of His Majesty's Legation during the absence of Sir A. Hardinge at Tabreez, to suggest to Lord Lansdowne the omission of the last phrase in Sir A. Hardinge's note, the Shah objecting to its minatory tone. Mr. Grant Duff was instructed that there appeared no reason for omitting the phrase referred to. The telegram conveying this instruction miscarried, and as the Persian Government have not since reverted to the matter, no reply has, up to the present (January 1905), been made to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's suggestion.

At an interview between His Majesty's Minister and the Bakhtiari Khans on the 3rd February, Haji Ali Kuli Khan inquired what support they might expect from His Majesty's Government in the event of an attempted Russian conquest of the country, and should the Persian Government adopt a hostile attitude towards them in consequence of their friendly relations with His Majesty's Legation. Sir A. Hardinge replied that he thought it unlikely that the Persian Government would resent the friendship between the Bakhtiari Khans and the British Legation so long as the present good relations between Persia and Great Britain continued, and he could see no reason why these good relations should be injuriously affected, since the maintenance of the integrity and independence of Persia was one of the main principles of British policy in the East. The precise nature and extent of our support would be determined by the circumstances which called it forth and could not be defined beforehand. Sir A. Hardinge's language to the Bakhtiari Chiefs received the approval of His Majesty's Government.

* Estimate by American missionaries.

On the 2nd March His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez reported that the Valiabd had contracted a loan amounting to 80,000*l.* with the Russian Banque d'Escompte, in order to pay off his existing liabilities, including a debt of 44,000*l.* due to the Imperial Bank of Persia. As His Imperial Highness apparently gave no reliable security, it may be taken for granted that the transaction was a purely political one.

In March cholera broke out at Kernanshah, having been introduced from Kerbela. Owing chiefly to the action of Agha Fazel Mamakani, a Mujtahed of Nejed, who broke through the cholera cordon between Khanekin and Kasr Shereen with a large number of followers, the disease rapidly spread throughout the whole of Persia. The epidemic raged in Teheran and its neighbourhood during the summer months, and is said to have destroyed there about 43,000 persons.* Towards the end of August the epidemic abated, but in January 1905 was still existing in Azerbaijan and Ardelan. There is, therefore, every prospect of a further visitation during the summer of 1905. It is interesting to note that the number of deaths in the British village of Gulahak was under a dozen, in spite of the fact that the population during the epidemic amounted to over a thousand people. Some of the neighbouring villages, in which sanitary precautions were not enforced, suffered severely.

At the end of March, His Majesty's Minister reported that all the provincial Governors had arrived in the capital, where they had been summoned by the Shah to a Conference on financial reform. An examination of the proposed reforms, as reported in Sir A. Hardinge's despatch No. 69 of the 22nd April, 1904, shows that three principal innovations were contemplated:—

1. The collection of the revenue to be left in the hands of the local authorities, but the taxes so collected to be paid into a provincial Treasury, which, after paying fixed salaries to the Governors and local officials, would remit the surplus to the central Treasury at Teheran.

2. The appointment of a "Minister of the Grand Vizier's Cabinet," who would practically become Under-Secretary for the Interior. Moayyed-es-Sultaneh, who was long Persian Minister at Berlin, was appointed to this office. He resigned in the summer of 1904, and the Grand Vizier's Cabinet was never really formed.

3. The appointment in each province of a "Mullatish" as a check on the local Governor.

Later in the year the Ain-ed-Dowleh introduced a tax on salaries of 10 per cent. in some cases; in others of 20 per cent. to 30 per cent.

After the Persian New Year (21st March), the following changes were made in the Governors of provinces:—

Province.	Changes Made.
Fars	The Ali-ed-Dowleh was replaced by the Shou-es-Sultaneh.
Kerman	The Zafar-es-Sultaneh was replaced by the Rukn-ed-Dowleh.
Yezd	The Jellal-ed-Dowleh was replaced by the Moayed-ed-Dowleh.
Arabistan and Laristan ..	The Salased-Dowleh was replaced by the Muzaffer-ul-Mulk in Laristan, and the Azam-es-Sultaneh in Arabistan. (The Muzaffer-ul-Mulk was dismissed towards the end of the year, and Laristan was given to the Fermani (or)ma Governor of Kernanshah.)
Khorassan	The Rukn-ed-Dowleh was transferred to Kerman, and his place taken by the Asaf-ed-Dowleh.

On the 19th April, Sir A. Hardinge informed the Grand Vizier that the Ameer of Afghanistan had accepted Colonel McMahon's Sistan Boundary Award.

In April the Persian Government suddenly erected their flag and placed guards on the Islands of Tumb and Abu Musa, belonging to the Sheikh of Shargah. On representations being made by His Majesty's Minister, the Persian Government agreed to remove their flags and guards, but reserved the right to discuss with His Majesty's Government their claim to these islands.

Early in April, owing to the increase of cholera at Kernanshah, the Russian Legation demanded that the quarantine arrangements in that town should be placed

To Foreign Office,
No. 56, March 28,
1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 87,
May 19, 1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 61,
Telegraphic,
May 24, 1904.

under the control of the doctor of the Russian Consulate. Fore-seeing that a compliance with this demand might lead to the establishment on the Bardsad frontier of a Russian cordon similar to that existing in Khorassan, Sir A. Hardinge dispatched Dr. Scott, of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, to Kermanshah. Dr. Scott was instructed to insist that the local authorities should pay the same attention to his views on sanitary questions as to those of the Russian doctor. The Persian Government recognized the justice of this demand, but appointed a physician of its own in the person of Dr. Vauve Bey.

On the 15th April, Sir A. Hardinge addressed a despatch to Lord Lansdowne regarding the alleged partiality of the Belgian Customs officials throughout Persia, and notably in Seistan, towards Russian as opposed to British interests. Accompanying this despatch were reports from His Majesty's Consular officers, tending to show that the charge of partiality was unfounded.

Early in March, Lord Lansdowne informed His Majesty's Minister that the Government of India were anxious to take advantage of the cool season to establish a telegraph station at Henjam. Henjam was originally authorized as a telegraph station by the Persian Government under the Convention of 1868, but was relinquished after twelve years. The Persian Government were informed of the intention of the Government of India to re-erect the station at Henjam, and were at the same time requested to give permission for the construction of a line connecting Henjam with Bunder Abbas. The need for this connection had been brought to the notice of Lord Curzon by the British community at the latter port during his Excellency's visit to the Persian Gulf in 1903. Communication between Henjam and India was re-established on the 19th April, but, in answer to Sir A. Hardinge's note, a reply was sent to the effect that the Shah had signified his intention to construct the line himself shortly. In the meantime a postal service was to be organized between the places in question. During Sir A. Hardinge's absence from Tehran (12th September to 15th December), Mr. Grant Duff continued to press the Persian Government to allow the Bunder Abbas-Henjam connection to be constructed. Towards the end of November the Mushir-ed-Dowleh informed Mr. Grant Duff that he thought the Shah might consent to the line being built by the British Government if it were handed over on completion to the Persian Government on payment of the cost of construction. To this arrangement His Majesty's Government stated they were disposed to agree, provided that the connection was made by means of a land line across Kishm Island and that British officials should work the telegraph office at Bunder Abbas unless and until the Persian Government took over the line. The Persian Government were also to bind themselves to work the line, when it came into their possession, with Persian subjects only. The matter is still under discussion.

On the 13th May, Sir A. Hardinge reported that the extension of the Central Persia telegraph-line from Bam to the frontier near Kuh Mahak Siah was completed, thus establishing for the first time in history direct overland communication between Europe and India. His Majesty's Minister, in his despatch, brought to Lord Lansdowne's notice the highly creditable manner in which Mr. W. K. Wood, of the Indo-European Telegraph Department (Persian Section) had constructed the Central Persia line.

On the 7th June, the Dutch engineer who had been employed by the Persian Government to examine the question of the proposed dam at Ahwaz presented his report. He estimated the cost of the works at 100,000*l.*, and proposed three alternatives:—

1. Construction by the Persian Government.
2. Construction by a Persian Company.
3. Construction by a foreign Company.

The possession of the lands rendered available for cultivation would be practically acquired by the Company. Alternative No. 3 was rejected by the Shah, who favoured No. 1. A British engineer has now been sent to report on the irrigation scheme in connection with the proposed Karun loan. The Persian Government have also dispatched an engineer to Ahwaz to report further on the matter.

Early in June an identic note was addressed by the Persian Government to His Majesty's Minister and to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, complaining that troops from Bagdad had violated the frontier at Soumai, which is under the effective control of Persia though situated in the debatable zone between Persia and Turkey. Sir A. Hardinge suggested that the Porte should be asked to abstain from any overt acts until the question of the rights of the case had been considered in conjunction with

the British and Russian Representatives. Instructions were sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg to inquire whether the Russian Government would join His Majesty's Government in a representation to the Porte on the lines suggested by Sir A. Hardinge. The Russian Government replied that orders had already been given to support the representations of the Persian Ambassador at the Porte. Similar instructions were sent to Sir N. O'Connor.

On the 12th May, Amin-ed-Dowleh, who was Grand Vizier in 1897, died. He was sincerely anglophile, and he was an enlightened man with liberal and progressive sympathies. A certain lack of vigour in giving practical effect to his theories appears to have been one of the causes of his fall.

About the middle of May, the Grand Vizier sounded His Majesty's Minister on the subject of financial assistance.

On the 4th July, Sir A. Hardinge reported that M. Naus wished to complete the British Loan of April 1903, as he was anxious about the effect on his receipts of the Russo-Japanese war and the cholera. The sum required was 100,000*l.*

On the 13th July, Lord Lansdowne instructed Sir A. Hardinge that, as regards the question of security, the condition of the advance was—

1. That it should be secured solely on the southern Customs; and
2. That the Persian Government should give a clear statement that the Customs of all southern ports, from Mohammerah to Gwetter inclusive, are hypothecated for the service of the entire loan of 300,000*l.*

Sir A. Hardinge pointed out that (2) was an entirely new condition, and, although it might be attached to a new advance, it seemed scarcely just to attach it for the first time to the completion of an earlier one, in connection with which it had never before been mentioned.

After some further correspondence, His Majesty's Government decided to complete the advance on the same security as in the case of the preliminary advance of 1903, on the understanding that a note embodying their views as to the expression "Fars and the Persian Gulf" was previously sent to the Persian Government. His Majesty's Minister reported the completion of the Loan Agreement on the 2nd September.

The "Règlement Douanier" was signed on the 29th August. Two formalities preceded signature, viz.:—

1. Sir A. Hardinge put in a declaration stating that he signed the "Règlement" with the reservation that the assurance respecting the pledging of the southern Customs given by the Persian Government in 1897 was in no way weakened or limited by the distinction made on the annexed Table for administrative reasons between the Customs division of "Arabistan" and that of the "south," which latter were not to be regarded as the only ones covered by the said assurance. M. Naus took formal act of this declaration.

2. M. Naus signed a supplementary declaration embodying the amendments of the "Règlement" desired by the Government of India.

On the 9th December, 1903, His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez had reported to Mr. Grant Duff, then in charge of His Majesty's Legation, that a naturalized Canadian subject named Mushi Daniel had been murdered by Seyed Ghaffar near Urmia. Mr. Grant Duff thereupon addressed a note to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh demanding the punishment of the Seyed and compensation for the family of the murdered man.

In March 1904 the same Seyed and a number of Kurds murdered the Reverend Benjamin Labaree, of the American Presbyterian Mission, under circumstances of great brutality. Early in May Sir A. Hardinge and the United States' Minister at the Court of Persia, in a joint note to the Shah's Government, called attention to the condition of affairs in the Urmia district, and strongly urged that steps should be taken (1) to send an armed force to overawe the Kurds; (2) to supply the Governor of Urmia with the requisite funds, and to inform him that the successful arrest of the murderers would be a condition of his maintenance in office; (3) that the Mujtehed, Mirza Hussein Agha, of Urmia, who had extended his protection to the Seyed, should be removed from Urmia; (4) to offer a pecuniary reward for the arrest of the murderers. As a result of this note, Seyed Ghaffar, the principal murderer, was arrested and sent to Tabreez, but the accomplices, who were Dasht Kurds, remained unpunished. During the summer and early autumn of 1904, repeated representations were made, both by His Majesty's Minister and by the United States' Minister, with a view to obtaining satisfaction for the murder at Urmia. In spite of the fact that His Majesty's Consul-General at

To Foreign Office,
No. 62,
Telegraphic,
May 26, 1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 138,
Telegraphic.

Foreign Office,
No. 76,
Telegraphic.

To Foreign Office,
No. 74,
Telegraphic.

Foreign Office,
No. 51,
Telegraphic,
August 11, 1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 95,
Telegraphic,
September 2,
1904.

Tabreez, and subsequently Captain Gough, were sent to Urmia in order to force the local authorities to take action, nothing was accomplished. In September Sir A. Hardinge proceeded to Tabreez and personally used his influence with the Valiahd to obtain a settlement of the case. The Persian Government, however, still continued to delay and to make excuses. In October Sir A. Hardinge proceeded on leave to England, leaving Mr. Grant Duff in charge of His Majesty's Legation. Towards the end of November Captain Gough was attacked by Kurds near Urmia, and this circumstance enabled Mr. Grant Duff to obtain the dismissal of the Nizam-ed-Dowleh, Governor of Urmia, and the promise of the removal of the Mollah, Mirza Hussein Agha. At the close of the same month the United States' Minister, finding all representations unavailing, was instructed by his Government to inform the Persian Government that if they did not agree by the 5th December to the demands made (viz., 50,000 dollars (in gold) compensation, the imprisonment for life of the Soyed, and the execution of the guilty persons), steps would be taken to enforce compliance. The Persian Government, after a few days' delay, unconditionally accepted the American terms, and paid 6,000*l.*, the balance to be paid if the guilty persons were not brought to justice by March 1906, or if the principal murderer, Seyed Ghaffar, escaped from imprisonment. Several of the Dasht Kurds implicated in the murder were arrested in January 1905 and sent to Tabreez.

Shortly after the departure of Sir A. Hardinge for Tabreez, the Hashmat-ul-Mulk informed Mr. Grant Duff confidentially that the Shah intended to keep him indefinitely at Tehran, although without depriving him of the hereditary Governorship of Seistan. Mr. Grant Duff was instructed to warn the Persian Government that such a disturbance of the political *status quo* on the frontier as would be involved by the removal of the Hashmat from his post, and the transfer of the Acting Governorship, now vested in his son, to another official, would not facilitate the realization of the desire expressed by the Shah for the early withdrawal of Colonel McMahon and his force from Seistan. The Persian Government, in answer to Lord Lansdowne's message, replied through their Minister in London that they deprecated interference by His Majesty's Government with the internal affairs of Persia, but gave no satisfactory assurances as regards the Hashmat. Lord Lansdowne informed the Ala-es-Sultaneh that the Hashmat's dismissal would certainly be attributed to his good-will to England, would produce a most unfortunate impression, and might induce His Majesty's Government to alter fundamentally their policy as regards Seistan and the adjoining regions. The Hashmat-ul-Mulk was still detained in Tehran at the end of January 1905.

Towards the end of October His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed reported that five new Russian telegraph clerks had arrived at that town, and that there were strong rumours that the Meshed-Seistan line was to be taken over by the Russian Government. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, in reply to inquiries made by Mr. Grant Duff, admitted the arrival of the clerks, but denied, both verbally and in writing, that there was any question of handing over the Seistan line to the Russian Government. It would appear that these telegraph employes were introduced into Persia without the knowledge or sanction of the Persian Government. They, and others who previously or subsequently arrived, are posted at various points on the line, but up to the present have not been permitted to work in the Persian offices. The Persian Government are trying to obtain their removal, and negotiations with the Russian Government were still proceeding in December both at Tehran and at St. Petersburg.

Early in November news reached His Majesty's Legation that Colonel Douglas, Military Attaché at Tehran, and Mr. Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, had been attacked and wounded between Khorremabad and Dizful. Mr. Grant Duff at once demanded (1) that effective steps should be taken by the Persian Government to protect the officers concerned; (2) the punishment of the guilty tribe; and (3) eventual compensation for loss incurred. It subsequently transpired that Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer were attacked by their own escort of Derakvends Lurs. Mr. Grant Duff was instructed to inform the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government had heard of the occurrence with indignation, that they held them responsible, and expected them to put an end to the state of things prevailing in South-west Persia. The Governor of Kermanshah, accompanied by His Majesty's Acting Consul at that place, has now proceeded to Luristan for the purpose of punishing the Derakvends (January 1905).

During the autumn of 1904 the Persian Customs Department complained on several occasions that the British post-office at Bushire received and distributed parcels without the legal duty being paid on such parcels. Early in December the Belgian Director of Posts seized the British mail. Mr. Grant Duff made immediate

representations to the Grand Vizier, at the same time sending orders to His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bushire to resist by force any further attempt on the part of the Persian Customs authorities to tamper with the British mails. The Grand Vizier caused orders to be sent to Bushire to restore the mail-bags which had been seized to the British post-office. A temporary arrangement was come to whereby a Custom-house officer is present at the opening of the British mails, and levies duty on parcels addressed to persons not exempted under the "Règlement Douanier." The question of the British post-offices in Persia is receiving the attention of His Majesty's Government.

During the spring of 1904 His Majesty the Shah's health became very uncertain, and at one time it was thought that he might not survive the summer. Towards the autumn there was a considerable improvement in His Majesty's condition, and his medical attendants are now of opinion that unless an acute illness supervenes His Majesty may continue to live for some time longer.

In the course of the year 1904 Colonel McMahon has demarcated the frontier between Persia and Afghanistan according to his Arbitral Award given in 1903.

In 1904 three Circulars were addressed to the foreign Representatives in Tehran, the provisions of which, if enforced by the Persian Government, are likely to affect foreign enterprise in Persia in the future.

These Circulars gave notice that:—

1. No Persian subject holding a concession in Persia may enter into any transaction for the sale, transfer, or grant of that concession to a foreign subject. Any infraction of this Decree will lead to the concession being annulled.

2. No Mussulman woman may in future work in silk (cocoon) factories belonging to non-Moslem persons.

3. No foreign subject may in future open a factory in Persia without obtaining permission from the Persian Government.

In taking note of these Circulars His Majesty's Minister pointed out to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that as regards No. 1 he hoped to hear that the transaction by which the Moayyer-el-Mamalek had sold half of his Telephone Concession to the Russian Bank had been annulled by the Persian Government.

The issue of Circular No. 2 was brought about by an incident at Barfroush. Mr. Charles Stevens, a British subject, has a cocoon-drying establishment at that town. In July the local authorities, at the instigation of the Mollahs, interposed to prevent women sorting cocoons in Mr. Stevens' factory, and also beat and insulted some of the workmen. Sir A. Hardinge demanded and subsequently obtained the punishment of the aggressors, and also informed the Persian Government that as regards the employment of women in factories belonging to foreign subjects he claimed most-favoured-nation treatment.

As regards Circular No. 3, His Majesty's Minister informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that the requirement of previous permission to open a factory implied the right of refusal, which might be so exercised as to nullify the commercial privileges enjoyed by British merchants not merely by the Treaties, but by long usage. Sir A. Hardinge stated that he had referred the matter to His Majesty's Government, and in the meantime had instructed His Majesty's Consuls in the sense of the Circular from the Persian Government.

(Initialled) E. G. D

No. 84.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 19. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 3, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to my despatches Nos. 234 and 236 of the 29th and 30th December, 1904, copies of a cypher telegram from M. Naus to the Director-General of Customs in Arabistan from myself to His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah, and of telegraphic correspondence between His Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf and myself respecting the Ahwaz dam project and Major Morton's mission.

Your Lordship will observe from Major Cox's telegrams that Major Morton passed Bushire a few days ago on his way to Ahwaz. He must, therefore, by now have reached Mohammerah.

To Foreign Office,
No. 102,
Telegraphic.

To Foreign Office,
No. 116,
Telegraphic,
October 27, 1904.

To Foreign Office,
No. 121,
Telegraphic,
November 2,
1904.

Foreign Office,
No. 66,
Telegraphic,
November 4,
1904.

I think it will be best for me to await some account of his first general impressions before I attempt to discuss with M. Naus any of the points as to the conditions of the proposed advance raised in the letter from the Government of India to Mr. Secretary Brodriek of the 10th November last.

I may mention, in connection with the navigation of the Karun, that the Persian Government have at length decided to comply with the request repeatedly made by me for the removal of the rocks near Kut Abdullah and one or two other points near Ahwaz, and have ordered that this shall be done. I inclose translation of a telegram on the subject from the Sheikh of Mohammerah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 84.

M. Naus to M. Waffelaert.

(Confidential.)
(Télégraphique.)

Le 24 Janvier, 1905.

ACCORD avec Gouvernement Persan, Gouvernement Indes enverra incessamment ingénieur pour examiner projet construction barrage Ahwaz. Le but de cette mission doit rester secret. On dira qu'ingénieur venir faire étude pour amélioration courant transports d'Ahwaz vers intérieur pays.

Prière donner urgence instructions dans ce sens à Douane Mohammerah, qui devra admettre librement bagages, armes, et munitions personnelles d'ingénieur, et donner aussi communication par lettre urgente à Van Roggen, qui est autorisé par Gouvernement à donner confidentiellement connaissance à ingénieur Anglais des plans et projets afin le mettre à même fournir rapport sur navigabilité du Karoun après construction barrage.

Inclosure 2 in No. 84.

Sir A. Hardinge to Consul McDouall.

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 24, 1905.

GOVERNMENT of India is sending Major Morton, R.A., to report on the Karun irrigation scheme. He was to have left Kurrachee on the 19th instant, and should therefore reach Mohammerah shortly. I have asked Persian Government to recommend him to the good offices of the local authorities, and they have promised me to do so. But we agree in thinking it better to keep the real object of his mission secret. If any questions are asked, he had better give out that he is examining the possibility of developing communications between the Karun and Central Persia on behalf of Anglo-Indian commerce. Van Roggen has been instructed by the Grand Vizier to discuss the Ahwaz dam proposals fully but confidentially with him. I suppose either Lorimer or Lynch's agent could put him up at Ahwaz, but warn him to take great care as to what he says in the presence of Ter Meulen. He might also say that Lynch have made representations to His Majesty's Government as to the results on the navigability of the Karun of building a dam at Ahwaz, and that he has been instructed to look into this also. This would account, if necessary, for his interviews with Van Roggen.

Show above to Major Morton on his arrival.

Inclosure 3 in No. 84.

Major Cox to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bushire, January 31, 1905.

A DUTCH engineer has arrived at Mohammerah from Ahwaz to interview the Sheikh as to Ahwaz dam. Sheikh wishes to hear views of British Government before committing himself, and has asked me to telegraph to him—

1. Whether the scheme is contemplated seriously;
2. Whether it meets with our approval; and
3. Would we advise him to come to an understanding with the Persian Government, and in return for an adequate *quid pro quo*, to lend his co-operation.

The engineer says he has been instructed to prepare complete scheme, and that Minister of Customs will find 2,000,000*l.* for it. He has now come to inform the Sheikh that all preliminaries have been arranged, but that his effective co-operation is indispensable in order to insure success. The following is a description of the scheme:—

Water sufficient to irrigate 144 square miles of land round Ahwaz is to be accumulated by means of a dam. Scope to be extended after lapse of twenty-four years out of profits realized. Agricultural machinery to be imported by the Persian Government, who will cultivate the land themselves, employing where possible local labour.

The Algewil tribe have cultivated the land in question for 150 years, and to resume it from them will be a difficult problem which only the Sheikh could tackle. If the information in any way concerns me, I should like to know what the nature of Major Morton's mission to Ahwaz is.

Inclosure 4 in No. 84.

Sir A. Hardinge to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 31, 1905.

YOUR telegram of to-day.

Following sent to Mohammerah on the 24th January:—

(Repeats Inclosure 2.)

You will probably by now have seen my despatches Nos. 234 and 236 to the Marquess of Lansdowne, copies of which I sent to the Government of India on the 7th instant.

The Persian Government is still anxious to get money for the dam from us. Van Roggen's assertions to the Sheikh about 2,000,000*l.* most likely represent his personal hopes in the event of the formation of a European Syndicate.

It would be as well for the Sheikh to express to the engineer no opinion beyond stating that he requires time to consider the bearing on his interests and of those of the Arab population of these schemes.

Inclosure 5 in No. 84.

Sheikh of Mohammerah to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

(Telegraphic.)

January 21, 1905.

I RECEIVED, on the 11th January, the telegram respecting the statements of the British Legation with regard to the rocks under the water of the Karun River opposite Kut Abdullah. Two years ago inquiries were made by the Foreign Office on this subject, and answer was submitted in detail. For the present, on account of the winter and the excess of water, the rock is under water. In summer, when the water decreases and the rocks appear, inquiries will be made and estimates of the cost, and I will again submit the matter.

No. 85.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 20.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 2, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches from Captain Gough, on special mission at Urmiah, respecting the steps taken by the Persian Government to punish the authors of the recent outrages in that district, together with a copy of my reply.

[1523]

Y

I showed these reports of Captain Gough confidentially to the United States' Minister, who had received similar information from Dr. Norton, the American Special Commissioner. The latter, however, thought—so, at least, I gathered from Mr. Pearson—that the order to the Mujtehed to leave for Meshed was *bona fide*, and would have to be obeyed, and I am personally of opinion, from what I know of the Valiahd, that His Imperial Highness would not have sent him, as Dr. Norton says he has actually done, a present of 200*l.* for his journey unless he meant him to use it for that purpose.

It would seem that the Persian authorities are taking steps, though slowly and reluctantly, to afford us the satisfaction we have demanded, and Mr. Pearson and I will have to continue to spur them on. It is, of course, only natural that Captain Gough, who is new to Persian and Turkish methods, should reflect the legitimate impatience of the missionaries at this tortuous and dilatory procedure. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh has not received the foreign Ministers for three weeks. He caught cold at the Sepah Salar's funeral, but some persons tell me that he is really suffering from an indisposition to pay the Grand Vizier, who is away in the country with the Shah, a fresh ransom for his retention of office. I have, however, represented to his son and Private Secretary, the Matamin-ul-Mulk, the importance of removing the Mujtehed while Captain Gough is still at Urmiah, and before the approach of the Mouharrem Fast provides him with a fresh pretext for delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

P.S.—7th February.—I have just received a message to the effect that the Shah has sent strict orders to the Valiahd that the Mujtehed is to leave Urmiah before the month of Mouharrem. The Kurds arrested by the Valiahd are on their way to Tehran, and the Shah's special Envoy has started from Tabreez for Tehran via Tiflis and Baku.

A. H. H.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

Captain Gough to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegrams of the 30th December and 1st January, informing your Excellency that Fath-es-Sultan left here on the 30th December, taking with him Gurgin Beg, *alias* Kurdu; Tellu Beg; and, it is said, Tamar Beg; Ali Khan, son of Mir Haji Beg; Mamur Beg; Mirza Kadir, and several servants. It is, however, uncertain whether Tamar Beg, Ali Khan, and Mamur Beg were of the party, but I telegraphed to Mr. Stevens to find out who arrived at Tabreez, and the manner of their reception, and to report to you. The day after their departure Mirza Hussein Agha sent his confidential servant, Haji Khalil, to Dr. Cochrane, and told him the names of those who had gone. He also said that Fath-es-Sultan had been unable to persuade the Begzades to go with him to Tabreez, and that it was he (the Mujtehed) who persuaded them to go. This statement was confirmed by the telegraph operator here, who told me that the Valiahd had telegraphed to Mirza Hussein Agha to get the Kurds to come to Tabreez, and guaranteeing their safety there.

Mirza Hussein Agha later sent a Seyed to my Mirza, and made through him proposals that he (the Mujtehed) should meet me on neutral ground at the house of one of the Klans here. He also intimated that he would like to be on friendly terms with the British. I have told the Mirza not to give any reply to this, as I do not know what course of action would be approved by you. I have since heard that the Valiahd intends to invite, or has invited, the Mujtehed to proceed to Mehed on a pilgrimage, and has made up a present of 1,000 tomans for his expenses *en route*.

There is a question whether it would not be wise to make friends with Mirza Hussein Agha, as Dr. Cochrane fears that if he is sent away from here he will, in revenge, use all his great influence against the Missions, and more especially so if he is allowed to return here. I am of opinion that it would be unwise to forgive this man, and I think that steps should be taken to prevent his return here within a certain number of years, as I do not think he is to be trusted.

The Russian Vice-Consul called here on the 1st January, and, as the Consular

flag was flying, I considered that it might be accepted as a call on myself. I therefore paid a return call on him on the 3rd, and the next day he sent to find out what time would suit me for his return call. I was, however, unwell, and therefore unable to fix a time. He has carefully explained to Dr. Cochrane how he met me when he was calling on Mr. Parry.

I have heard from Mr. Stevens (who telegraphed that he had informed you) that the Shah's Mamur is in Tabreez, and does not intend coming on here. This seems to be a wilful disregard of orders. None of our demands have so far been complied with; the persons concerned in the murder of Mr. Labaree have not been arrested, or, at least, one or two of them only have been taken to Tabreez. The Mujtehed has not been removed from here, nor have the persons who attacked me been arrested, and in my opinion the Shah's Mamurs should be ordered to come here to see that our demands are fully and promptly complied with.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. GOUGH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

Captain Gough to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,

Urmiah, January 10, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a telegram from your Excellency, received through Mr. Stevens on the 8th, in which you speak of the interview which you and Mr. Pearson had with the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and in which the latter informed you that the orders given to the Shah's Envoy were to confer with the Valiahd, who would issue the necessary effective orders. I have understood from a telegram from his Excellency the United States' Minister to Dr. Norton that the Shah's Commissioner was to arrive at Urmiah within a specified number of days, but it appears that his Excellency was not rightly informed by the Mushir-ed-Dowleh. It would appear to be a matter for regret that the execution of the Shah's orders should have been left to the Valiahd, who has shown for many months past his inability or lack of will to do what was required; but I trust that His Imperial Highness will justify the hopes of Mr. Pearson, and prove less obstructive than he has shown himself in the past.

Your Excellency says that you both impressed on the Mushir-ed-Dowleh the importance of the early removal of the Mollah from this town, and that you were informed that the Valiahd had sent an official—the Salar Afgham—for the purpose, as also for the preliminary investigations and verification at Urmiah. The Salar Afgham is the same as the Fath-es-Sultan, to whom I have referred in my previous telegrams, and I have telegraphed the fact to you to-day. He arrived here on the 16th and left on the 30th December, and, so far as I am aware—for he did not communicate with either Dr. Norton or myself during his stay—he made no movement towards the removal of the Mollah, nor did he conduct any sort of investigation. Since writing my despatch of the 5th January I have heard that he took with him to Tabreez Gurgin Beg (*alias* Kurdu) and Tellu Beg, Ali Khan, a lesser Begzade Chief (and not the son of Mir Haji Beg, as I was previously informed), and Miram (another Chief of no great importance), Mirza Kadir, and some four or five servants. They were apparently tied on their horses, two on each horse, but I cannot give any information as to the manner of their arrival or their reception at Tabreez. I trust that steps may be taken to insure the prevention of their escape or release from Tabreez.

I would also urge that but a very small portion of our demands has as yet been complied with in the arrest of Gurgin Beg and Tellu Beg.

Dr. Cochrane received a letter on the 6th instant from Mir Haji Beg, one of the most influential of the Begzade Chiefs. The letter contained vows of innocence, and professed the writer's willingness to swear by Christ and the prophets the innocence of the clan as a whole, and ended with a veiled threat that, should the Begzades now taken to Tabreez suffer execution, the young men of the tribe would in all probability require their blood at his, Dr. Cochrane's, hands. This, in my opinion, is a matter that should be safeguarded against, as, if these men are to wreak their vengeance on the missionaries here, the whole affair will require resettlement. The only course I can imagine that will lead to future good behaviour on the part of this turbulent tribe is that they should be required to furnish hostages to the Government. At the same time, if the Persian

Government does not behave with more vigour than they have yet shown, the chance of overawing the Kurds and inducing them to accept the terms laid down will have gone for another year. On my first arrival I was told, "When the winter comes and the Kurds have no chance of retreat, effective steps will be taken against them." That was four months ago, and the winter is half spent, and so far not a single soldier or a gun has been moved, even from Tabreez to Urmiah. At the same rate it is probable that next autumn will still find the Governor here, saying, "Wait till the winter," and affairs will be no nearer completion. It is now nearly a year since Mr. Labaree was murdered in cold blood on the high road, and the only steps taken have been the arrest of the Seyed, and, as the result of great pressure, the arrest of four Begzades, two of whom are not known to be implicated. His Imperial Majesty the Shah has sent an Envoy to inquire into matters, and to see that the necessary action be taken. And the Envoy has not even come near the scene of the crime, and, so far as is apparent, has spent a month in doing nothing at all.

It is reported that Imam Kuli Mirza is at last on his way to take up his appointment as Governor here, and it is said that he will arrive in a week or so, if he does not stay anywhere *en route*.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. GOUGH.

Inclosure 3 in No. 85.

Sir A. Hardinge to Captain Gough.

Sir,

Tehran, February 2, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatches of the 5th and 10th ultimo, respecting the arrest of certain Kurds said to have been implicated in the murder of Mr. Labaree, and in the attack upon yourself, as well as respecting the overtures made to you by the Mujtched, Mirza Hussein Agha.

I agree with you in regretting the dilatory manner in which the local authorities are carrying out their engagements, but these methods are characteristic of the Persian as well as of the Turkish Governments, and I think that when it is borne in mind that the chief murderer is now in prison here, that the indemnity asked for on behalf of Mrs. Labaree has been paid, that the Governor of Urmiah has been dismissed, and that several important Kurds have been arrested and sent to Tabreez, we can hardly say that only a very small portion of our demands has been complied with.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh has not received the foreign Ministers' owing to indisposition for nearly three weeks, but I am continuing to press him by messages to insist on the removal of the Mujtched, and I understand from the United States' Minister that he is satisfied, from a perusal of his reports from Urmiah, that the Persian Government is honestly resolved on it. The facts mentioned by you of the sum of 1,000 tomans collected as a gift to pay for his pilgrimage by the Valiahad, and his own evident endeavours to enter into friendly relations, clearly point to the above conclusion, though it will no doubt be necessary that Mr. Pearson and myself continue to apply the needful pressure here.

I concur with you in thinking that a reconciliation with Mirza Hussein Agha would, under existing circumstances, be premature and undesirable, but I would not exclude the idea of an eventual establishment of better relations between him and the Missions, once he has realized that he cannot safely molest them. I should, for example, when he passes through Tehran on his way to Meshed, be quite willing to communicate with him (or even to see him personally on the neutral ground of some friendly Mollah's house) and to tell him that, although the two Governments of the United States and Great Britain have been compelled to insist on his temporary removal from Urmiah, we might be willing, a few months hence, when the trouble caused by recent incidents had subsided, to reconsider our attitude towards him, on the understanding that he used his influence to promote instead of injuring our interests. He would, however, in this event have to bear in mind that he would again be removed, and then definitely, on the first complaint made against him. He would, in fact, return to Urmiah in a year's time, so to speak, as a ticket-of-leave man, and I understand, from what I hear of Urmiah affairs, that his power would probably have been so weakened in the interval by the influence of his rival, the Bala Mujtched, that he would not easily recover it in its entirety. Some such compromise might dispel the apprehensions expressed to me by Dr. Cochrane, and

political capital might be made out of it with the Ulema here, as well as in Meshed, where this persecution of the Mujtched might otherwise be used against us by the Russians.

This question, however, should be considered at greater leisure, and in the meantime you should receive with all courtesy any overtures which Mirza Hussein Agha may make to you, and should reply that you will not fail to report them to me; but as the settlement of recent incidents and controversies at Urmiah rests not with yourself, but with the Persian Government and the British and American Legations, you can take no action on any proposals or suggestion he may make to you without instructions from Tehran.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 86.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 4, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, in continuation of Mr. Grant Duff's despatch No. 223 of the 9th December, copies of correspondence which have passed between myself and M. Naus respecting recent interference by the Customs officials at Bushire with the mail-bags for the British post-office.

I have not troubled your Lordship with the detailed report of this affair sent to me by Captain Trevor, as it merely amplified information already given to you by Mr. Grant Duff, and reproduced in my inclosed note of the 12th January to M. Naus.

Captain Trevor suggested that both M. Lavers, who acted for M. Naus during the latter's absence, and issued the orders which led to the seizure of the mail-bags, and M. Waffelaert, Acting Director of Customs at Bushire, should be made to tender formal apologies for their conduct, but I did not think it advisable to press for this without being certain that your Lordship would desire me to do so, as I felt sure that the Persian Government, which considers that their officers were supporting its rights and dignity, would have offered a determined resistance to such a demand. The incident has, moreover, been provisionally settled, and is not likely to occur again.

As regards a permanent arrangement, I might perhaps come to an agreement with the Persian authorities that the procedure followed in Turkey and Egypt in connection with the delivery of mails to the foreign post-offices established in Ottoman territory should be adopted as regards ours in the Persian Gulf. If your Lordship approves of this suggestion, I would venture to ask that the Postmaster at Constantinople should be instructed to furnish me with particulars on the subject.

Mr. Grant Duff asks me to inform your Lordship, in relation to this correspondence, that he has nothing to add to his despatch No. 223 of the 9th December, 1904, except that the statements made by M. Lavers in regard to his language at their interview are inaccurate.

It is true that Mr. Grant Duff characterized the action of the British Postal authorities at Bushire as "extraordinaire," but he added "si le rapport du Directeur de la Douane est exact," or words to that effect. He also said that immediately he received the views of the Government of India he would do his best to settle the difficulty in a manner satisfactory to both parties. It is, Mr. Grant Duff submits, obviously impossible that he undertook to abolish on his own authority a system which has been in force for about forty years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. Naus.

M. le Ministre,

Téhéran, le 12 Janvier, 1905.

M. LAVERS aura sans doute rendu compte à votre Excellence du regrettable incident qui s'est produit à Bouchir pendant votre absence, où les agents de la Douane, agissant sous les ordres de M. Waffelaert, se sont emparés par la force de la poste de Sa Majesté Britannique, en empêchant les cipayes de la résidence de la remettre au bureau postal, selon l'usage qui a toujours existé depuis les premiers jours de l'établissement de ce bureau.

Je viens de recevoir à ce sujet un rapport détaillé du Résident par intérim, d'où il ressort que cette mesure violente a été prise par M. Waffelaert pendant que la question des modifications à apporter au régime postal à Bouchir faisait l'objet d'un échange de vues entre M. Lavers et la Légation de Sa Majesté Britannique. Le Capitaine Trevor a en effet déclaré formellement à M. Waffelaert que les instructions qu'il recevait de Téhéran ne lui étaient point encore parvenues; qu'il ne pouvait par conséquent prendre sur lui de mettre en vigueur le nouveau système que M. le Directeur-Général des Douanes du Sud désirait appliquer, et qu'il l'invitait par conséquent à surseoir jusqu'à ce que ce nouveau système eût été accepté de commun accord.

M. Waffelaert lui montre en réponse un télégramme de M. Lavers, d'après lequel la Légation Britannique aurait promis d'envoyer d'urgence au Résident à Bouchir l'autorisation d'appliquer le nouveau régime. En admettant même que M. Lavers eût bien compris la déclaration qui lui a été faite à ce sujet par Mr. Grant Duff, il était évident que les instructions promises par ce dernier n'étaient point encore parvenues au Capitaine Trevor, et M. Waffelaert est donc sorti de son droit et a manqué d'égards vis-à-vis de la Résidence de Sa Majesté en supprimant, de son seul chef, et sans le consentement formel du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, une procédure consacrée par un usage qui remonte à plus de quarante ans. Ce procédé de la part de M. Waffelaert a en outre fait subir à la Malle Royale un retard de plus de douze heures, retard qui sera l'objet d'une réclamation pour dommages-intérêts de la part de la Compagnie "British India."

Le Capitaine Trevor ajoute que lorsque, le 4 Décembre, il envoya l'escorte de la Résidence à la Douane pour y prendre la malle locale, M. Lucas, le Hamal Bachi, s'opposa à ce qu'elle en prit possession, et insulta en termes grossiers le sergent de l'escorte, qu'il qualifia de "sacré imbécile" ("dunned fool"), en lui adressant d'autres injures. Les assertions à cet effet du sergent sont corroborées par un autre cipaye qui était présent quand son chef fut injurié par M. Lucas. Ce fonctionnaire devrait, me semble-t-il, être réprimandé et chargé de faire au sergent des excuses pour la grossièreté de sa tenue. Il n'est, d'ailleurs, qu'un agent pour le débarquement et la livraison de marchandises, et n'avait aucune raison de se mêler à cette affaire, encore moins de se permettre un langage abusif vis-à-vis d'un sous-officier portant l'uniforme de Sa Majesté Britannique et agissant d'après les ordres de son chef.

Il m'est difficile d'admettre que M. Waffelaert ait pu agir comme il l'a fait d'après les ordres de M. Lavers. Ce dernier, s'il a effectivement télégraphié à Bouchir que la Légation Britannique ordonnerait à la Résidence d'inaugurer le nouveau système, a mal compris ce que lui a dit Mr. Grant Duff. Le Chargé d'Affaires de Sa Majesté Britannique à Téhéran n'était point compétent pour donner de pareils ordres sans se référer au Gouvernement des Indes, dont relève l'Administration des Postes au Golfe Persique. Il ne pouvait que lui promettre, ce qu'il a d'ailleurs fait, d'essayer d'arranger l'affaire conformément aux désirs de l'Administration des Douanes, aussitôt qu'il aurait obtenu l'autorisation qu'il demandait du Gouvernement Vice-Royal. Il a ajouté, au sujet d'une plainte de M. Lavers de ce que la poste Indienne distribuait des colis postaux à des particuliers, qui se soustraient par ce moyen à l'acquiescement des droits, "qu'il mettrait de l'ordre dans cette affaire," mais cette phrase ne pouvait impliquer son consentement à l'inauguration d'une procédure toute nouvelle en ce qui concerne le mode de recevoir et de distribuer les sacs postaux, sans une entente entre les deux Gouvernements intéressés. Au surplus, comme j'ai déjà eu l'honneur de faire observer à votre Excellence, même en supposant que Mr. Grant Duff eût tenu à M. Lavers le langage qui lui a été attribué, M. Waffelaert aurait dû attendre que les ordres promis eussent été reçus par le Capitaine Trevor avant de trancher par une action unilatérale une question pendante entre les deux Administrations. J'aime à

espérer que votre Excellence voudra bien lui envoyer le rappel à l'ordre que comportent des précédés si peu courtois vis-à-vis de la Résidence de Sa Majesté Britannique, et que son remplaçant provisoire, M. Wagner, n'ait point jugé nécessaires. Elle partagera, j'en suis sûr, mon avis que le recours aux solutions violentes tend à provoquer des représailles du même genre, et à produire des situations aiguës qu'il est préférable, de part et d'autre, d'éviter.

Laissez-moi ajouter que M. Lavers se méprend en exprimant à Mr. Grant Duff l'avis que le Congrès Postal International de Rome, auquel le Gouvernement Persan se réserve de proposer certaines modifications au régime postal actuel, "est seul compétent pour trancher la question du maintien des bureaux postaux Anglo-Indiens dans le Golfe Persique." Le Congrès ne peut légiférer en pareille matière qu'avec le consentement des Gouvernements intéressés, dont chacun a la faculté de faire les réserves qu'il juge opportunes, et il est peu probable que les Grandes Puissances Européennes, qui entretiennent des bureaux postaux dans plusieurs pays de l'Orient, seraient disposées à lui reconnaître le droit de reviser les attributions de ceux-ci. Une pareille révision doit faire l'objet, comme cela a été notamment le cas pour la poste Française dans le Protectorat Britannique du Zanzibar, d'un accord entre les deux États intéressés, accord qui ne sera point facilité par une disposition du côté Persan à modifier par des procédés brusques le *statu quo*, en écartant, d'une façon méprisante et hautaine, les représentations courtoises de l'autre partie.

Je saisis, &c.

(Signé) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

*M. Naus to Sir A. Hardinge.**Ministère des Douanes et des Postes, Téhéran,
le 4 Février, 1905.*

M. le Ministre,

J'ai l'honneur d'acuser réception à votre Excellence de son office du 12 Janvier dernier, relatif au fait que la Douane de Bouchir a exigé que l'office postal Anglais de cette ville soumette ses sacs aux formalités Douanières.

Les faits s'étant passés pendant mon absence, j'ai chargé M. Lavers de m'en faire l'historique, et j'ai l'honneur de remettre ci-joint à votre Excellence copie du rapport explicatif de ce fonctionnaire.

Je rappelle au surplus à votre Excellence qu'au mois d'Août dernier elle a signé, au nom du Gouvernement Britannique, et après en avoir même soumis le texte au Gouvernement des Indes, une Convention ayant le caractère d'un Règlement Légal fixant les obligations imposées pour les importations en Perse. J'en rappelle les extraits ci-après:—

"Article 27 (8). Les sacs renfermant des dépêches et des correspondances postales, à l'exclusion formelle des sacs ou colis renfermant des colis postaux ou des colis d'échantillons, sont exempts de la visite et des autres formalités Douanières, pourvu qu'ils soient fermés et scellés par une agence postale étrangère et remis aux agents de l'Administration des Postes de la Perse."

"Article 51. Les marchandises déchargées doivent, dès leur sortie du navire ou de l'embarcation, être conduites directement dans les magasins ou enclos de la Douane."

Ces articles très formels et très explicites n'ont fait, au moment de la discussion du Règlement Légal, l'objet d'aucune restriction en ce qui concerne les bureaux postaux Anglais des ports du sud.

Les fonctionnaires de mon Administration étaient dès lors fondés à en exiger l'exécution, et leur bonne foi ne peut en l'occurrence être aucunement mise en doute: ils ne pouvaient supposer qu'une législation d'ordre général acceptée par le Gouvernement Anglais ne put être appliquée aux offices postaux prédesignés; ils avaient, au contraire, tout lieu de croire que les services Gouvernementaux Anglais seraient les premiers à se conformer à une telle législation, puisque celle-ci résulterait d'une Convention spéciale conclue entre les Gouvernements Britannique et Persan.

Qu'il me soit permis maintenant de demander à votre Excellence si le Gouvernement des Indes entend soustraire ses offices postaux du Golfe Persique à l'observance

des dispositions Douanières que j'ai rappelées plus haut. Votre Excellence comprendra qu'il est indispensable que je sois fixé le plus tôt possible sur ce point, afin de pouvoir, le cas échéant, en référer à Sa Majesté le Schah.

J'ajoute qu'en ce qui concerne la question de la suppression éventuelle des bureaux postaux Anglais du Golfe Persique, je suis pleinement d'accord avec votre Excellence pour reconnaître qu'elle ne pourrait résulter que d'un accord entre les Gouvernements Anglais et Persan, et il n'est jamais au surplus entré dans les intentions de M. Lavers de le contester.

Toutefois, je ne puis croire que le Gouvernement Britannique se refuserait à apporter au fonctionnement de ces bureaux les modifications qui sont exigées par la Convention Anglo-Persane, laquelle régleme l'importation en Perse des colis postaux et des colis d'échantillons.

En ce qui concerne enfin l'incident qui se serait passé entre un sergent Indou et le Hamal Bachi de la Douane, j'ai eu soin d'en réclamer l'explication au service intéressé, et j'aurai l'honneur d'en écrire ultérieurement à votre Excellence.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) J. NAUS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 86.

M. Lavers to M. Naus.

M. le Ministre.

Téhéran, le 2 février, 1905.

J'ai pris connaissance de l'Office qui m'a été envoyé à l'Administration des Douanes par son Excellence Sir A. Hardinge, Ministre d'Angleterre à Téhéran, et dont les termes nécessitent de ma part quelques explications, puisque les faits se sont passés à l'époque où j'étais chargé de gérer en votre absence le Ministère des Douanes et Postes.

Par son Rapport du 1^{er} Octobre, M. Waffelaert, Directeur-Général des Douanes et Postes à Bouchir, me signalait que l'Office postal Anglais de Bouchir, par contravention aux stipulations formelles des Articles 27 et 51 du Règlement Légal, remettait directement à des particuliers des colis postaux venant de l'étranger, et qui, par conséquent, n'étaient soumis ni à la visite Douanière ni au paiement des droits de douane.

Une liste de vingt-sept colis remis aux destinataires, en dehors de toute intervention Douanière, était jointe à ce Rapport.

Par ma lettre du 20 Octobre je fis immédiatement part à Mr. Grant Duff, Chargé d'Affaires de la Légation Anglaise, de l'irrégularité du procédé de l'Office postal Anglais de Bouchir.

Je lui rappelai qu'en 1902 l'absence de législation Douanière nous avait empêché de mettre fin aux abus commis par le dit Office postal, et que force nous avait été de tolérer jusqu'à la mise en vigueur du Règlement Légal.

J'ai déclaré ensuite qu'en présence des termes formels des Articles 27 et 51 du dit Règlement, je ne pouvais admettre plus longtemps le régime abusif adopté par les Offices postaux Anglais du Golfe Persique, et qu'à l'avenir tous les sacs postaux en destination de ces Offices devaient être conduits directement dans les bureaux Douaniers, où ils seraient ouverts par les agents postaux Anglais en présence des employés de la Poste Persane et des employés de la Douane.

Les colis et les plis, ou les paquets paraissant contenir des objets imposables, devaient être retenus par la Douane et afin que tout fût en règle, il en devait être donné décharge à la Poste Anglaise par les employés de la Poste Persane.

J'ajoutais enfin qu'il allait de soi que les immunités diplomatiques et Consulaires consacrées par l'Article 27 du Règlement Légal seraient toujours respectées, mais que je venais à faire remarquer que ni les agents de la Poste Anglaise ni les médecins de la Quarantaine n'avaient droit à l'exemption Douanière, pas plus que certains marchands, qu'à mon grand étonnement je voyais figurer sur la liste des personnes ayant reçu directement des colis postaux.

Par son Office du 21 Octobre Mr. Grant Duff me répondit par des considérations sur le fonctionnement postal des bureaux Anglais du Golfe Persique — considérations qui n'avaient qu'un rapport fort éloigné avec la question soulevée dans ma lettre précitée, à laquelle il prêtait un caractère purement postal, alors qu'elle était écrite au nom de l'Administration des Douanes.

C'est dans ce sens que j'ai répondu à Mr. Grant Duff par mon Office du 22 Octobre, dans lequel je commençais par insister sur le fait qu'au point de vue postal je n'émettais aucune prétension ou réclamation, et que je me bornais à demander que les Offices postaux Anglais des ports du Golfe Persique observent les prescriptions du Règlement Légal entré en vigueur le 1^{er} Septembre, après avoir reçu l'approbation et la sanction du Gouvernement Anglais. Je faisais remarquer que lors de la discussion du dit Règlement la question de la Poste Anglaise n'avait nullement été soulevée, et qu'il n'existait aucun arrangement, écrit ou verbal, lui permettant de se soustraire aux formalités Douanières; que dans ces conditions du moment, ou dans l'application de ces formalités, l'Administration des Douanes s'en tenait strictement aux stipulations du Règlement Légal, je ne voyais pas en quoi il y avait matière à intervention de la part du Gouvernement des Indes et de la Légation Britannique.

J'insistais enfin pour la mise en vigueur des dispositions Douanières énumérées dans ma précédente lettre.

Mr. Grant Duff n'a pas jugé à propos de répondre à ma seconde lettre.

De mon côté, je suis resté dans l'attente de sa réponse jusqu'au 22 Novembre, date à laquelle m'est parvenu un nouveau Rapport de M. Waffelaert établissant que de nouveau 47 colis dont il joignait la liste avaient été directement remis par la poste Anglaise aux destinataires, qui avaient été ainsi dispensés tant des formalités Douanières que des paiements des droits.

J'ai immédiatement fait connaître à Mr. Grant Duff que, "malgré tout le désir que j'avais d'être agréable à la Légation d'Angleterre et d'éviter de brusquer les choses, il ne m'était plus possible de retarder davantage l'envoi à Bouchir d'instructions ordonnant à la Douane de soumettre tous les sacs postaux arrivant de l'étranger ou s'y rendant aux formalités énoncées dans ma lettre du 20 Octobre."

Je lui communiquai la liste des colis qui m'avait été envoyée par M. Waffelaert, et je faisais remarquer que "l'esprit de tolérance dont nous avions toujours fait preuve ne pouvait pourtant nous amener à admettre la continuation de pareils abus; que j'avais donc l'honneur de lui communiquer les instructions télégraphiques que j'envoyais à la Direction Générale des Douanes à Bouchir."

Je n'ai reçu aucune réponse écrite à cette communication.

Mais le 26 Novembre, soit quatre jours plus tard, Mr. Grant Duff, ayant bien voulu venir me trouver dans mon bureau à la Douane pour me parler de la question du bureau de Kuk Malek Siah, nous nous entretenîmes accessoirement de la question de la poste Anglaise de Bouchir.

Mr. Grant Duff me fit connaître que la conduite du Consul-Général Anglais de Bouchir, qui servait d'intermédiaire pour la remise directe à des particuliers de colis postaux venant de l'étranger, lui paraissait tout au moins "extraordinaire" et que je pouvais compléter "qu'il mettrait immédiatement de l'ordre dans cette affaire." J'insiste sur le fait que je reproduis ici textuellement les expressions dont s'est servi Mr. Grant Duff, et je ne pense pas qu'il soit contestable qu'en présence de ces termes explicites je pouvais croire que ma manière de voir, conforme au Règlement Douanier, et clairement exposée dans trois lettres successives, avait reçu l'accord de la Légation Anglaise. Cela est tellement vrai que séance tenante j'ai expédié à Bouchir un télégramme conçu comme suit:—

"Légation Anglaise m'a promis envoyer urgence Consul, Bouchir, ordre que sacs postaux doivent suivre régime indiqué par moi. Faites, donc, stricte application."

M. Wagner, faisant fonction de Directeur-Général des Douanes à Bouchir, a exécuté mes ordres, et le 2 Décembre, à l'occasion de l'arrivée de la malle portant la poste Anglaise, il s'est rendu à bord et a fait transporter dans les locaux Douaniers les sacs contenant les colis postaux.

Le Consul Anglais a immédiatement fait une protestation officielle auprès du Directeur-Général des Douanes, et avec une regrettable exagération des faits il a télégraphié à Téhéran que "le Directeur des Postes Impériales avait saisi la poste Anglaise de Bouchir."

C'est cette communication inexacte du Consul Anglais qui m'a valu la lettre très dure que Mr. Grant Duff m'a écrite le lendemain, 3 Décembre.

On y remarque que Mr. Grant Duff se borne à rappeler sa note du 21 Octobre et qu'il ne fait aucunement mention des correspondances et conversations postérieures à cette note.

J'ai répondu à Mr. Grant Duff par ma lettre du 4 Décembre, en rétablissant exactement les faits et en faisant notamment disparaître la confusion que M. le Consul Anglais continuait à entretenir, entre les agissements des Douanes et ceux de l'Administration des Postes, laquelle n'est intervenue en rien.

J'ai également rappelé à Mr. Grant Duff mes lettres successives des 20 et 22 Octobre et du 22 Novembre, ainsi que notre conversation du 26 Novembre.

J'ai répété qu'il n'était fait aucune restriction en faveur de la Poste Anglaise au chapitre du Règlement Légal qui traite des "exemptions"; que ces notes frauduleux, consistant en la remise directe à des particuliers de marchandises impossibles, étaient nettement établis à charge de l'agent de la Poste Anglaise; qu'il était inadmissible que le Consul Anglais continuât à se refuser à faire observer par ses ressortissants des dispositions Douanières ratifiées par la Légation d'Angleterre.

J'ajoutais que j'étais avisé que le Consul Anglais avait engagé la Poste Anglaise à ne pas se soumettre aux formalités Douanières et que c'était donc à ce fonctionnaire que pouvait légitimement s'appliquer l'imputation "d'agissements peu convenables" dont la Légation Britannique voulait bien gratifier le Directeur-Général des Douanes à Bouehir.

Je conclus en rejetant sur l'attitude intransigente dudit Consul toute la responsabilité de l'incident.

Au surplus, j'ai été mandé le jour même chez Son Altesse Sadr Azam, où j'ai refait l'histoire de l'incident en présence de Son Excellence Mouchir-ed-Dowleh et de Mr. Grant Duff.

Après avoir pris connaissance des termes formels du Règlement, Son Altesse m'a complètement approuvé, et comme Mr. Grant Duff continuait à protester, Son Altesse s'est bornée à lui demander si lui, Chargé d'Affaires, voulait maintenant contester la validité d'un acte officiel contresigné par son Ministre au nom du Gouvernement Anglais.

La discussion dont je ne crois pas utile de rappeler tous les détails se prolongeait pourtant et semblait ne pouvoir aboutir.

C'est alors que j'ai pris l'initiative de proposer un arrangement provisoire auquel Son Altesse le Sadr Azam a bien voulu se rallier et qui a fini par recevoir l'assentiment de Mr. Grant Duff. Il a été convenu qu'au lieu d'être conduits dans les locaux de la Douane, pour y être soumis à la vérification Douanière, les sacs contenant des colis postaux seraient, sous l'escorte d'un fonctionnaire Persan, conduits dans les bureaux de la Poste Anglaise, où ils seraient ouverts en présence de nos employés vérificateurs, qui procéderaient au recensement des colis postaux que la Poste Anglaise s'engageait à ne remettre aux destinataires que par l'intermédiaire de l'Administration des Douanes et après le paiement des droits.

J'ai immédiatement envoyé des instructions dans ce sens à la Douane de Bouehir.

Son Altesse le Sadr Azam a, au surplus, insisté sur le caractère provisoire de cet arrangement, qui devrait être remplacé le plus tôt possible par la stricte application du Règlement.

Mr. Grant Duff a formellement promis que la question serait réglée immédiatement; je crois devoir remarquer qu'elle ne l'est point encore, bien que deux mois se soient passés depuis.

Je me persuade, M. le Ministre, qu'après avoir pris connaissance des explications qui précèdent, vous voudrez bien reconnaître que le Directeur-Général des Douanes de Bouehir ne mérite pas les reproches qui lui sont adressés par la Légation d'Angleterre, attendu qu'il s'est borné à exécuter les ordres que je lui ai donnés.

J'ai également la confiance qu'en ce qui me concerne, vous admettez que j'ai agi avec toute la patience et la modération désirables, et avec des intentions pleinement conciliatrices qui ont permis l'établissement d'un régime provisoire qui ne tardera pas sans doute à ramener la pratique légale voulue par la Convention sur le Règlement des Douanes.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) F. LAVERS.

Inclosure 4 in No. 86.

M. Naus to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Particulière.) Ministère des Douanes et des Postes, Téhéran,
Mon cher Ministre, le 4 Février, 1905.

JE REÇUS, Vendredi, jour de chômage pour mes bureaux, quand on m'a remis votre billet me demandant de hâter la réponse concernant l'incident de Bouehir. Je n'avais, par conséquent, pas d'employés sous la main. J'ai néanmoins pu trouver le

dossier, et préparé de suite la réponse que l'on vient de terminer de copier et que je vous remets ci-jointe.

Je me persuade que dans cette question le Gouvernement des Indes ne voudra pas méconnaître les droits du Gouvernement Persan, et je suis également convaincu de rencontrer votre appui pour que nos droits ne soient pas sacrifiés en vertu de l'adage que la raison du plus fort est toujours le meilleur. Le Gouvernement Britannique vient d'ailleurs de montrer, à l'occasion du Traité Younghusband, qu'il sait respecter le droit des faibles, et je ne doute pas qu'il agisse de même dans la question qui nous occupe.

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) J. NAUS.

Inclosure 5 in No. 86.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. Naus.

(Particulière.)

Mon cher Ministre,

Téhéran, le 4 Février, 1905.

MERCI pour la note que vous m'avez envoyée au sujet de la poste. J'en envoie copie à Londres et à Calcutta.

Je ne pense pas que cette question ait été en vue quand nous avons discuté ensemble le Règlement Douanier. Mon Gouvernement a envisagé ce dernier comme ayant trait aux importations effectuées par les commerçants et autres particuliers, et non point comme devant servir indirectement à modifier le système postal, tel qu'il existe depuis longtemps dans le Golfe Persique. Le Règlement, tel que nous l'avons accepté, a été d'ailleurs, d'après votre propre désir, une reproduction presque exacte de celui que vous avez conclu avec la Russie. Or, celle-ci n'a jamais eu de bureaux postaux en Perse, et n'avait, par conséquent, point de motifs pour s'occuper de leurs rapports avec la Douane. Aussi suis-je sûr que l'on aurait fait certaines réserves à Calcutta, si l'on y avait prévu la controverse qui a surgi.

Je me réserve de vous écrire plus longuement quand j'aurai étudié d'une façon approfondie le Rapport de M. Lavers. Aujourd'hui, jour de courrier, je n'ai pu que le parcourir à la hâte.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 87.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 92.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 7, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan which has arrived since I addressed to your Lordship No. 17 of the 31st ultimo, giving his views on the communications of the Persian Transport Company, inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 156 of the 13th December, 1904.

I certainly understood, as did Mr. Prece, that the Bakhtiari Khans had clearly accepted their indebtedness to the amount of 50,000 rans, that being the maximum sum which they had arranged with Mr. Taylor should be expended by him upon the road. But it should be easy to obtain a formal admission by them of this obligation, especially in connection with the further correspondence which we shall have to have with them in connection with the points discussed in my despatch No. 17.

I fully appreciate the importance to the Transport Company of the question of exchange, especially as it now stands at 62 kras to the £, and I told Colonel Picot in London a few weeks ago that I would in view of it give the matter my most careful consideration. I fear, however, after again going into it, that it would be quite impossible to get the Khans to accept a sterling standard as the basis of the transaction. They would appeal to their agreement with Mr. Taylor that not more than 300,000 kras should be spent upon the road without their consent, and would say that if they complied with the Road Company's present demand they would be paying a good deal more. They would, in fact, insist with tenacity on what they

would regard as the letter of their bond. I entertain no doubt that if the value of silver were to rise they would recognize the obligation to pay the debt in kran, notwithstanding the loss which might accrue to them, and that though they might, perhaps, make an attempt to benefit by the enhanced value of silver, they would not, when pulled up, persevere in it. I should be prepared, if your Lordship approved, to ask Mr. Preece to discuss the question with them, and to suggest that they should make a formal declaration to the above effect. It is much to be regretted that the point was not cleared up, and an unmistakable agreement come to respecting it at the time of Mr. Taylor's negotiations with the Chiefs, but I hardly see how it can be settled at this stage of affairs in the sense desired by the Road Company.

Whether it would be possible for His Majesty's Government to make up to the latter to some extent for the loss thus entailed upon it by a slight increase in the subsidy which is now paid to it is a question which your Lordship might, perhaps, regard as worthy of consideration, in view of the extreme difficulty of carrying out commercial enterprises such as that on which it is engaged at a profit, in a country like Persia, except with such a strong and substantial backing as the Russian Ministry of Finance affords to Russian subjects under similar conditions. It would not, however, I feel sure, be politic for us to attempt to reopen the matter after all that has passed with the Khans, except in the sense suggested above, viz., by saying to the Chiefs that Messrs. Lynch wished the transaction to be based on a gold standard, and, when they demur to this, asking them in that case to state definitely that they will not, in the event of a rise in the value of silver, which they might be told is not improbable after the war, the economic effects of the latter being the main cause of its rapid fall, claim to revise to their own advantage the amount to be paid by them in kran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 87.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 6.)
Sir,

Isfahan, January 26, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 1 of the 1st instant, forwarding me Lord Lansdowne's despatch No. 156 of the 13th December, inclosing copies of letters from the Persian Transport Company (Limited), regarding the liabilities of the Bakhtiari Chiefs to Messrs. Lynch Brothers.

With reference to the acceptance of the Chiefs of their indebtedness to the amount of 30,000 tomans, the Chiefs, in their conversation with you in Teheran in my presence, accepted the arrangement formulated in your letter to them; and this, combined with their letter in reply, appeared at the time to me, and, I presume, also to you, to denote the acceptance of these terms, otherwise you would have instructed me to take action to fulfil all requirements. It is a matter of regret that this point was not brought forward sooner, and before I left for the Bakhtiari country, as it would have been easy enough when I was discussing the various questions I did with the Chiefs to have settled the question then and there. My proposed journey was well known to Messrs. Lynch and the Persian Transport Company, and also the question of handing over the road had been settled long before I started, so that there is really no reason why the matter should not have had that attention which, it appears, the latter Company thinks it requires. As it is, I will write to the Chiefs and try to get them to give me a categorical acceptance of the fact that, after twenty-five instalments are paid, a balance of 2,500 tomans still remains which will have to be paid with the last instalment so as to conclude the transaction.

All the other points raised by the Persian Transport Company are beyond my province; but it is obvious that, having received instructions from the Foreign Office to arrange the matter on a kran basis, such an arrangement having been accepted by the Bakhtiari Chiefs, it is not possible for you to reopen the question with them without laying the Legation open to a breach of faith.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. PREECE.

No. 88.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 7, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a telegram which I sent on the 27th ultimo to His Majesty's Resident at Bushire, giving particulars as to changes which I learnt from the Ministry of Customs were about to be made in the Belgian staff in the south of Persia.

I have, at the same time, the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Acting-Consul at Resht on the subject of M. Heynssens, the new Director-General of the Southern Customs, who appears to have given a great deal of trouble in Gilan to the Russian authorities, and to be a somewhat troublesome person. I shall take an opportunity of asking M. Naus to impress on him the importance of a conciliatory attitude at Bushire.

M. Lavers, the Secretary-General of the Customs Department, who acted for M. Naus in the latter's absence, has, I hear, received from His Majesty the Emperor of Russia the First Class of the Order of St. Stanislaus. He gave, as your Lordship is aware, a good deal of trouble both to Mr. Grant Duff and to several other foreign Representatives, and M. Naus admitted to me unofficially that his conduct had not always been as judicious as might have been wished.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 88.

Sir A. Hardinge to Resident, Bushire.

(Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, January 27, 1905.

THE following alterations will, I understand, be shortly made in Belgian staff of Customs and posts in the south of Persia. M. Lambrain will be Director-General of Armbistan, instead of Bushire, and M. Waffelaert will be sent to Kermanshah. M. Stass goes to Bunder Abbas, and M. Catersel will be under M. Heynssens at Bushire. The latter proceeds from Resht to his new post. Though Heynssens is not, as far as I know, specially anti-English, he is rather a rough sort of person. I know him slightly.

Inclosure 2 in No. 88.

Acting-Consul Churchill to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,

Resht, January 25, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Heynssens, the Director-General of Customs and Posts for the Caspian Ports, has been transferred to the Persian Gulf in the same capacity.

M. Offeriew, in conversation with my French colleague and myself, gave us to understand that the transfer of M. Heynssens is a source of gratification to the Russian Consulate as he was exceedingly troublesome and was, moreover, *de facto* Governor of Enzelli, which was the more easy because the Salar Alkham does not reside at Enzelli, where he is represented by a lieutenant whose sole qualification is that he is the son of his deceased predecessor.

With reference to my previous reports respecting M. Simais' management of the Menjil quarantine station, I have now to inform your Excellency that this official has been transferred to the Enzelli Custom-house in a petty capacity, and that M. Lepêche has been confirmed as Agent of the Caisse Impériale and Director of Posts for this province which, I think, an altogether better arrangement for everybody, excepting the Chief of Customs at Enzelli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED CHURCHILL.

No. 89.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 7, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, in continuation of previous correspondence, and with special reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 78 of the 19th December, 1904, a copy of the note addressed by me to the Persian Government on the subject of the Henjam-Bunder Abbas telegraph extension.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh has not yet replied to this note. I reminded him of it yesterday, and said I should be glad of an answer before my messenger left. His Excellency has just sent to tell me that the matter is still before the Shah, but that he will send me a reply in a few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Your Excellency,

Tehran, January 15, 1905.

YOU were good enough to inform me verbally at our interview on the 4th instant that the Persian Government had reconsidered the question of connecting Bunder Abbas with Henjam by a telegraph cable, and were now disposed to construct the line. You concurred in the suggestion which I had the honour to make to you that I should submit to you definite proposals in writing for giving effect to this decision.

The simplest way of doing so would be by means of a brief Agreement similar to those repeatedly concluded by my predecessors with those of your Excellency for the extension of telegraphic communications in Persia, and notably to that which I had the honour of signing with you on the 16th August, 1901.

Such an Agreement would run as follows:—

"1. The Persian Government having decided, in pursuance of the provisions of Article 1 of the Convention of 1868, to connect the port of Bunder Abbas with the telegraphic system of the Persian Gulf, the British Government agrees to place at its disposal for this purpose the services of the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

"2. The connection shall be effected by means of a land line across the Island of Kishm (or by a submarine cable) from Bunder Abbas to the Indo-European Telegraph Department's station at Henjam.

"3. The arrangements for the construction, working, and maintenance of the line, as well as for the allocation of the profits received from it, shall be identical with those contained in previous Telegraphic Conventions between the two Governments, notably in the Convention of the 16th August, 1901."

If, on the other hand, the Persian Government prefers, once the line is completed, to take complete possession of it, and assume the responsibility for its working and upkeep, then, instead of the foregoing, Article 3 might run as follows:—

"3. The line and the offices required for its working shall be constructed by officers to be provided for the purpose by the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and shall, after repayment by the Persian Government of the outlay, as well as of any expenses for working, maintenance, or repairs which may have been incurred by the Department between the completion of the line and its transfer to the Persian Ministry of Telegraphs, become the sole property of the Persian Government, but shall, pending such repayment, be worked and managed by the Department.

"4. It is agreed that the Persian Government, upon entering into possession of the line, shall employ only Persian subjects on it and in the telegraph office at

Bunder Abbas, but this provision shall not preclude the Persian Government from employing foreign subjects in the service of the Indo-European Telegraph Department should it desire or have occasion to borrow, and the Department be willing to lend their services."

His Majesty's Government attaches importance to this last provision, in view of the attempts which have been made by the Russian Legation to induce the Persian Government to employ Russian telegraphists on the Central Persian and Seistan telegraph lines.

The above is only a rough draft, embodying the substance of communications received by me from His Majesty's Government, and it is possible that certain emendations might be desired by them in it, but before discussing details I should be glad to learn whether your Excellency would be authorized to conclude an Agreement on these general lines, and if so, which of the alternative suggestions sketched by me would be most agreeable to the Persian Government.

With reference to the question of a land line or a submarine cable, if the line is to be taken over when constructed by the Persian Government, it would be necessary that it should be a land one across the Island of Kishm, as a submarine line would require a telegraph ship to effect repairs in it, such as those employed by the British Government, and by British and other foreign Telegraph Companies, and the Persian Government could hardly be expected to incur the great expense, out of all proportion to the profits, of procuring and maintaining such a vessel, or of providing the staff of engineers necessary for mending cables under the sea.

The cost of making and maintaining the land line across Kishm would be, moreover, a great deal less than that of a submarine cable. It is estimated by His Majesty's Government that it will amount to about 75,000 rupees, or 30,000 tomans, while the submarine cable would cost 124,016 rupees.

I append the estimates for the two alternative schemes. The annual charge for upkeep is estimated at 6,400 rupees, or about 2,500 tomans a-year. It is not easy to estimate the probable profits to Government, as these for the first few years are likely to be small; but there can be little doubt that the line will ultimately fully repay the cost of laying and maintaining it, owing to the great impetus which will be given by it to the trade of Bunder Abbas. It will be followed—to mention only one result in this direction—by the opening of a branch thereof of the Imperial Bank of Persia, which has hitherto been prevented by the non-existence of telegraphic communications. It will, moreover, strengthen the hold of the Persian Government upon the whole district of Bunder Abbas, by enabling orders from Tehran or Bushire to be delivered in a few hours to the local Government, and thus indirectly increase the security of traders against robberies or disorders. Nor can it be doubted that by increasing the value of land, as the Central Persian line has already done in Kerman, it will enable the State to draw from the district an increasing revenue, without this being felt by the population. I should add that the connection of Bunder Abbas with Henjam will prove much cheaper than the line fore-shadowed in the Convention of 1865 connecting Bunder Abbas overland with Jask, which is estimated to cost 30,500*l.*, or 150,000 tomans.

I may mention officially in this connection to your Excellency (I have already done so verbally) that His Majesty's Government is prepared to agree to the proposal that telegrams exchanged on the Central Persian line between the Persian Government and its Consul-General in India should be charged at half rates only, but I am to make it clear to your Excellency that this concession will apply to the Central Persian line only, and cannot take effect till the similar arrangement with regard to British State telegrams comes into force on the final completion of that line. His Majesty's Government hope that the friendly spirit which has induced them to meet the wishes of the Persian Government in this respect, and which leads them always to desire to co-operate with it in all questions relating to the telegraphic communications binding together the two Empires, will be reciprocated by the Ministers of His Majesty the Shah in the matter of the Bunder Abbas-Henjam extension, which forms the subject of the present communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 90.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.-(Received March 4.)

(No. 27.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 8, 1905.

MY telegram No. 6 of the 28th January will have given your Lordship the substance of the complaints made to me by the Heshmet-ul-Mulk respecting the extortions to which he was being subjected here.

Mr. Churchill had two interviews with him, one at his agent's house and one at the Heshmet's own, the upshot of which was the request for the immediate advance of 2,000*l.*, of which I informed your Lordship and the Government of India by telegraph. On receipt of the Government of India's telegram of the 3rd instant, though I did not feel justified without a direct reply from your Lordship in giving the Legation guarantee, I informed the Heshmet-ul-Mulk that I hoped to be able to arrange the matter for him with the Imperial Bank, and asked him to give me a written undertaking to repay the loan in a month's time.

I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation of his reply, from which your Lordship will see that he no longer requires it. It is possible that he may have obtained the remittance which he states he has received from Seistan, but it would not surprise me to learn that he had been accommodated by the Russian Bank, which would not mind running the financial risk if it thought that it could thereby gain political influence over the Heshmet.

I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a telegram received by me from His Majesty's Consul in Seistan respecting the Heshmet's complaint that his son was unable to collect the taxes of that district.

The Grand Vizier has only just returned from a prolonged absence with the Shah in the country, but I shall take the first opportunity that presents itself of again pressing his Highness either for the reappointment of the Heshmet-ul-Mulk as Governor of Seistan, or to undertake to give us such equivalent guarantees for our interests on that part of the frontier as your Lordship, in consultation with the Government of India, may decide upon demanding.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 90.

Heshmet-ul-Mulk to Acting Consul Churchill.

(Translation.)

(After compliments.)

[Received February 7, 1905.]

I HAVE had the honour to receive your letter, for which I am grateful, and I also thank you for the kindness which you have shown me.

Regarding the 10,000 *tomans*, for the present a remittance has reached me from Seistan, and affairs have been arranged. In the future, if I require money, I will again trouble you, and his Excellency the Minister will not in his friendship refuse. Please express to his Excellency my great gratitude to him for all his kindness.

(Signed) Heshmet-ul-Mulk.

Inclosure 2 in No. 90.

Consul Macpherson to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Seistan, January 31, 1905.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 3, the Deputy Governor, whom I interviewed previous to, and after, receipt of your telegram, bitterly complained of the Yamin-i-Nizam and the Mostansir-ul-Mulk. They were, he said, now actively taking part in matters relating to administration of district as well as of revenue. On the 25th January he warned me formally at our interview that his orders were disregarded by the people of Seistan, and that he could not be responsible for consequences if peace was disturbed.

I think the Heshmet's specific complaint regarding non-payment of taxes refers to general difficulties as to this year's revenue, for which the Deputy Governor has of late been pressed vigorously by the Mostansir-ul-Mulk. The Heshmet has, however, wired from Tehran that he was himself arranging these matters there, and the Deputy Governor has therefore been unable to make any settlement here. A telegram has now come from the Heshmet ordering that the grain be handed over to the Mostansir, and I believe this will soon be done. It is now rumoured here that the Mostansir will succeed the Heshmet as Governor of Seistan if the latter does not return, and it is clear that the Heshmet's prestige here has suffered seriously of late. People are beginning to think Mostansir-ul-Mulk is the real authority in charge. If our support of the Heshmet is to continue, active intervention on his behalf seems now to be indicated, as his authority here seems like to dwindle to a mere shadow. This telegram, which is addressed to the British Minister, Tehran, has also been sent to India.

No. 91.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.-(Received March 3.)

(No. 29.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 8, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the summary of events in Persia during the past month which have not been reported in separate despatches.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE

Inclosure in No. 91.

*Monthly Summary of Events in Persia not recorded in separate Despatches.**Tehran.*

THE Shah has been away for the last ten days at Jajerd for shooting. His Majesty returned to-day to Tehran. He was accompanied by the Ain-ed-Dowleh.

Conflicting opinions are expressed as to the proposed tour to Europe, the general idea being that the Grand Vizier is opposed to it, but may be forced into acquiescence in order to save his position. The Shah has expressed a wish to visit the Courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Lisbon, and Madrid, which he has not yet seen, and still speculates as to whether the conclusion of the war will admit of his extending his journey to Peking and the battlefields of Manchuria.

M. Naus has insisted that the funds for the journey must be drawn from the Shah's personal revenues, not from those of the State, and suggests that if this is objected to the expenditure of the private revenues may be regarded as a loan by His Majesty, which will ultimately be refunded out of the customs revenues.

The Saad-ed-Dowleh, formerly Persian Minister at Brussels, has succeeded the Fakhr-ul-Mulk as Minister of Commerce. The latter's dismissal for intrigues against the Ain-ed-Dowleh is reported in Mr. Churchill's Memorandum, annexed to Legation despatch No. 18. The Saad-ed-Dowleh is likely to be a more efficient and active occupant of the post than his predecessor. Having been refused as Persian Minister at Washington and Paris, he is ambitious of becoming Minister for Foreign Affairs and the prospect of his appointment in that capacity has been recently dangled by the Grand Vizier before the Mushir-ed-Dowleh with a view to stimulating fresh and larger disbursements by his Excellency. The Saad-ed-Dowleh professes strong anti-Russian views, is by way of being a Persian patriot and reformer, and is hostile to the Belgian Customs Administration. He has the reputation of not being scrupulous in money matters, but is personally agreeable.

It is reported that the Salar-ed-Dowleh will go either to Kerman or to Khorassan, most probably the former, the Nayer-ed-Dowleh getting Meshed, for which a larger

"pishlakh" is asked than the young Prince is able to raise. The Naser-ul-Mulk, however, who was the Salar-ed-Dowleh's Vizier in Kuristan, is endeavouring to get sufficient money to obtain Khorassan for him, which he would greatly prefer to Kerman.

The Shah has expressed his disapproval of the proceedings of the Rukn-ed-Dowleh, Governor-General of Kerman, in connection with his proposed expedition to Beluchistan, which is regarded as extravagant and wasteful.

Although the "Tarbiat" newspaper, which receives the daily printed telegrams and publishes full translations of them, had already under the press a full account of the recent revolutionary disturbances in St. Petersburg and other Russian towns, the editor was not allowed to issue his paper containing them, the Shah having ordered that all details of the riots should be suppressed.

The Bazaar, however, is not entirely dependent on the newspapers for its news on matters of this kind. Those who receive the printed telegrams are fully aware of what has been happening, and rumour circulates freely, if anything exaggerating the importance of the events.

Ispahan.

The Zil'es-Sultan has given robes of honour to his sons, Behram Mirza and Akbar Mirza, and has appointed the former to command the Jellali regiment, and the latter to the Feridun and Chahar Mahal regiments. This has caused considerable heart-burnings among the other members of the family.

The Bani Osmah, the Zil'es-Sultan's sister, who is constantly intriguing against him with the Russians, together with the Saram-ed-Dowleh, her son, and the rest of her family, are to leave for Tehran at once, presumably to carry on there their intrigues against the Zil'. The latter is much disturbed at this turn of events, which he has in vain tried to avert, as it involves the departure of three of his daughters who are married to three of the Bani's sons. It is understood that the Bani Osmah and her family have placed all their property in pledge to the Russian Bank for five years, and that on the Saram-ed-Dowleh's departure the Russian Consul-General, Prince Dolgorouki, to occupy his Palace, the Hasht-i-Behisht, one of the old Safavian Palaces.

As, however, the Jellali-Dowleh has received from the new Russian Minister a friendly message for the Zil'es-Sultan, it is possible that M. de Speyer will be less bitter in his opposition to the Zil' than was his predecessor, M. Vlassoff.

There has been a good deal of agitation among the Ispahan Mollahs led by Agha Nejefy and his son, Agha Kamal. Their chief line of attack is against the Zil'es-Sultan and his Government, but, so far as British interests are concerned, they only come into direct contact with us over the Church Missionary Society's schools and the new hospital. However, they also interfere largely in all matters, commercial and other, as, for instance, when they agitate to have every case tried by the Shar' law.

It is feared that unless the Ain-ed-Dowleh has these agitators removed, they may during the summer, when, and if, the Shah goes to Europe, cause a very disagreeable situation in Ispahan. It is, however, improbable that the Ain-ed-Dowleh will be induced to add to his existing difficulties with the clergy by a fresh quarrel with Nejefy and the Ispahan Mollahs just to please the Zil'es-Sultan.

Shiraz.

Rahdari has been openly raised on the Bushire-Shiraz Road. His Majesty's Minister has made representations on the subject to M. Naus and to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and has instructed Mr. Graham to act on the Local Government. It is stated that 12,000 tomans were levied in all.

The Shua-es-Sultaneh's officials are busy trying to get the last instalments of "mallat" paid in advance. Payment of salaries being always in arrears, this step causes a certain amount of discontent; some people aver that the Prince has accumulated as much as 300,000 tomans during his short tenure of office. His Royal Highness himself, however, is always complaining of the difficulty of getting his due out of the stingy and avaricious population of Fars.

There are frequent thefts on the Bushire-Shiraz Road, the chief offenders being Haider Beg Kiumarji and a rival of his, Nur Mohammed Beg, of Daliki. The former

has been invited by the Prince to come under safe conduct and take "bast" in his stables till his affairs are settled, i.e., till he has been squeezed, but has shown no disposition to acquiesce in the suggestion.

Cholera still exists in Fars in the villages near Abadeh and in the Kashgai country. Meanwhile, the city of Shiraz is in a filthy condition, and the Prince has taken no steps towards cleansing it except levying money to do so.

There has during the past month been a movement against the Church Missionary Society schools in Shiraz. The prime mover is Agha Mirza Ibrahim, a leading local Mujtehed; but he is, perhaps, aided or encouraged by the Sardar-i-Akrum, Vizir of Fars, who has a personal spite against the Rev. C. Stileman. Possibly also it may be connected with the agitation in Ispahan, as Agha Nejefy is known to be in correspondence with the leading Mollahs of most of the chief towns of Persia.

Yezd.

Some Parsees who hold certificates of registration as British subjects were recently summoned to the Governor's Palace and made to sign documents to the effect that they are not British subjects. When they at first refused, they were threatened with confiscation of all their land, as, by Persian law, none but Persian subjects are allowed to hold land. They then signed and gave up the papers, and are said to have bought them back subsequently at a high price. It is said that this trick was shown to the Governor by a certain Ardeshirjee, a Bombay Parsee, who had a spite against the Yezd Parsees.

Photography is being attended to by His Majesty's Legation.

Kermanshah.

Lieutenant Williams, His Majesty's Acting Consul, observing that the Persian cosacks used to salute the Russian Consul and not himself, took the opportunity of a particularly marked case of this to call the attention of the Ferman Fermani, Governor-General of Kermanshah, to it. He demanded (1) an apology from His Highness, (2) that the two senior officers responsible for the incident in question should be called in and reprimanded in his presence, and (3) that in the future all honours paid to the Russian Consul should also be paid to the British Representative. The Governor-General acceded to all these demands, and matters have been placed on a proper footing. His Majesty's Minister has written to Lieutenant Williams approving his prompt action in the matter.

The Ferman Fermani has exhausted every device for delaying his departure for Laristan to punish the Dirak-wand Lurs. The last resource was the illness of his wife (the Shah's daughter), who had fits whenever her husband was about to start. On the 15th instant, however, he went into camp preparatory to starting in earnest, and he has since been heard of at Kangawar.

Before leaving, he had an interview with Lieutenant Williams, to whom he expressed his friendship for England and his hopes for British support in his struggles with the Ain-ed-Dowleh in the event of his successfully carrying through the expedition in Laristan.

The prospects of the expedition are dealt with in a special despatch.

Kerman.

The merchants of Kerman have taken "bast" in the telegraph office as a protest against the insecurity of the roads, especially that leading to Meshed, and against the apathy of the authorities. His Majesty's Consul has also reported frequent robberies on the roads between Kerman and Bam, a district which till recently was fairly orderly. His Majesty's Legation has made representations on the subject to the Persian Government at Tehran.

The Rukn-ed-Dowleh proposes to make an expedition into Beluchistan to exact from the tribes the enormously enhanced revenue which they profess themselves unable to pay. His Majesty's Consul thinks that Beluchistan is, indeed, as the Governor-General states, falling into a state of anarchy, but believes that the remedy

proposed would be worse than the disease, and that it would be inexpedient in the present state of insecurity near Kerman to denude the district of its troops. The Shah, it is stated, disapproves also of the proposal, which he regards as wasteful and useless.

The Russian Consul at Kerman has appointed a Kerman Parsee to be Russian Consular Agent at Astara. As the man owed money in Kerman, the Karguzar would not let him leave till his creditors were satisfied. Mr. Miller then complained that the Karguzar was anti-Russian and a tool of Major Sykes, but the Mushir-ed-Dowleh has supported the Karguzar.

One of Mr. Miller's objects in Kerman is undoubtedly to create a Russian, or rather anti-British, party among the Parsees of Southern and Eastern Persia, and, through them, among their co-religionists in India.

M. Cesari, of Seistan fame, who has been travelling on a kind of mission in South-eastern Persia, to study roads and ways of communication, has been for some time in Kerman, and has called on Major Sykes. He seemed quite disposed to be friendly. He stated that all the Customs posts on the Beluchistan frontier had been withdrawn; their receipts were nil, while their upkeep cost 3,000 tomans a year, and three of the employés were murdered.

Referring to his past difficulties with English officials, he said they were largely due to mutual incapacity to understand each other, he knowing no English and they no French.

Mr. Miller is meditating a tour, his only subject at Ratsinjan having been giving some trouble.

His Majesty's Consul left at the beginning of January for Bam with the Commercial Mission. The latter has everywhere been cordially received since it reached Kerman, and the Belgian Customs Department have been helpful in supplying any information in their power.

His Majesty's Consul again states that the Governor-General has spent all his money, and has been in difficulties to send his instalments of revenue to Tehran.

Seistan.

The Mustansir-ul-Mulk has received orders to take over the whole of the Seistan revenue grain.

The obstructiveness of the Karguzar, amounting almost to insolence at times, became nearly intolerable, and His Majesty's Consul referred to Tehran a particularly bad case (that of Mohammed Aldari, in which some British subjects were assaulted and the Karguzar refused to give any satisfaction. As the Karguzar himself wishes for nothing so much as to be recalled from Seistan (even with ignominy), and as he is in any case to be removed at Noruz, His Majesty's Minister confined himself to requesting that he should be severely reprimanded, and arranged through the head of the English Department of the Persian Foreign Office that this should be done. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh has since informed His Majesty's Minister that the Seistan Karguzar shall give no more trouble.

Birjand.

From Birjand it is reported that the Shaukat-ul-Mulk has requested the British Agent (Abbas Ali) to enlist British interest to retain the Governorship of Birjand for himself or for his brother, Mohammed Ibrahim Khan, now in Tehran. It is also reported that the Muaziz-ul-Mulk, the Tehran official now at Birjand, has received orders appointing him temporary Governor of Kafi.

Seistan Demarcation.

Demarcation was finally completed on the 20th December. During the final stages, difficulties were raised by the Afghan and Persian Commissioners, both of whom, perhaps for appearances' sake, complained that the interests of their respective countries were being sacrificed. Colonel MacMahon, however, held to his own views throughout, and the final proceedings were harmonious, the rival Commissioners parting on very friendly terms.

The news of the fall of Port Arthur was received in Seistan on the 5th January, and was celebrated in the Afghan Commissioner's camp by bonfires, which were kept up all night.

Meshed.

A Customs case has arisen in which the camels of a British Indian subject, one Abdul Hamid, have been confiscated under Article 97 of the "Règlement Douanier." Abdul Hamid claimed, under the Supplementary Declaration to the "Règlement," the substitution of a fine for the confiscation of the means of transport. The Director of Customs thereupon imposed a fine of 60% on, not only Abdul Hamid, but also on each of his three servants, making a total of 240%. The camels are only worth some 150%.

M. Castaigne supported his contention on the wording of the last sentence of the Supplementary Declaration. The matter has been referred to His Majesty's Legation, where the matter has been discussed with M. Naus. As the Declaration was avowedly based on Indian Customs legislation, the opinion of the Government of India as to its exact meaning has also been requested.

M. Castaigne, the Belgian Director-General, was on bad terms with the late Russian Consul-General, but has been friendly with the newly-arrived one. As he is rather an overbearing individual, it is possible that he has been venting on the British Representative the spleen which he had hitherto been reserving for the Russian. He has acquired much "kudos" in Belgian circles in Tehran by the influence he is said to have acquired over the Governor-General of Khorassan and other Persian officials.

Three attacks have been made by robbers on sowars of the Turbati-Haidari escort, all of which were unsuccessful. Amir Khan was the offender—at any rate, in the worst of the three cases. He is a kind of robber Chief, with a regular band of well-armed men, and he is said to subsidize the Governor of Turbat and the Commander of the Kargi sowars of the Russian Quarantine cordon.

All efforts to induce the Governor-General of Khorassan to break up the gang have proved ineffectual, and the matter has been referred to Tehran, where His Majesty's Legation has made representations to the Central Government.

The Russian postal sowar, carrying letters between Turbati Jam and Pul-i-Khatun, was also robbed of everything he possessed.

Up to the 14th January the Russian Quarantine cordon had not received their pay, but were then daily expecting it.

Resht.

His Majesty's Acting Consul at Resht reports that M. Officié, hitherto Acting Russian Consul there, has been transferred to Ispahan. The latter informed Mr. Churchill that the Russian Consul-General at Ispahan had been on very bad terms with the Zil-es-Sultan, and that he had been requested to use every endeavour to create better relations between His Royal Highness and the Russian Consulate. This confirms the entry under "Ispahan," to the effect that M. de Speyer would probably be less bitter to the Zil than was his predecessor, M. Vlassoff.

(Signed) R. C. LINDSAY.

February 4, 1905.

No. 92.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4)

(No. 7. Commercial.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 2, 1905.

I HAVE received several reports from His Majesty's Consul at Kerman respecting the proceedings of the Commercial Mission, under the presidency of Mr. Newcomen, which is now visiting South-East Persia on behalf of the Indian Chambers of Commerce. It has everywhere been courteously, and even cordially received by the Persian authorities, the only exception being the Belgian Chief of

Customs at Bunder Abbas, M. Cattersel, who, in defiance of orders sent by his superiors at Tehran, behaved to it with extreme incivility. Captain Grey informed me, when I was at Bunder Abbas last year, that M. Cattersel was a very objectionable individual, and a violent Anglophobe, and I therefore mentioned his conduct to M. Naus, pointing out the deplorable impression which it would create in India. His excellency has recalled him from Bunder Abbas, and appointed him provisionally an assistant in the Customs Department at Bushire. He has named as Chief of Customs at Bunder Abbas a M. Stass, formerly Assistant at Bushire, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who is a sensible man, and has always been on good terms with our officials.

The Russians have done their best to represent this Mission to the Persians as a political one, having all sorts of sinister designs, and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh actually sent one of his officials to me with a secret report from Kerman, no doubt inspired by M. Miller, which stated that its members were making maps and taking photographs, besides instituting inquiries into the strength of the various garrisons in Persian Beluchistan, and that some of them were believed to be military officers. As these stories, though hardly likely to impose on the Persian Ministers, were calculated to have an influence on the Shah, I addressed an official note to the Persian Government on the 11th ultimo, pointing out their gross and palpable absurdity.

The Mission, which has visited Kerman and Bam (Beluchistan), returns via Shiraz and Bushire in six weeks' or two months' time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDING.

No. 93.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 6.)

(No. 121.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, February 28, 1905.

WITH reference to Sir Nicholas O'Connor's despatch No. 657 of the 9th October, 1903, I have the honour to forward herewith, to your Lordship, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting a correspondence which has recently passed between him and Jafer Agha, Chief of the Abidin section of the Shekaks.

As your Lordship will observe, Captain Tyrrell would like to learn whether his answer to Jafer Agha meets with your approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 93.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Mr. Townley.

(No. 7.)
Sir,

Van, February 1, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a correspondence which has recently taken place between me and Jafer Agha, Chief of the Abidin section of the Shekaks.

This man is one of the brigands who infest the frontier, and who render the direct road from Van into Persia (that through Bashkala and Dilman, across the Salmas Plain) useless as a means of communication.

I made his acquaintance in the winter of 1902, when I travelled in Persia. Details concerning him and his tribe are given in my No. 30 of the 1st September, 1903.

It would seem that he has at length fallen out with the Persian Government, and that, after the manner of his kind, he now wishes to change masters, and cross the frontier. But I have little information beyond what is contained in his letters. The Vali here is naturally unfavourable to his aspirations, saying that there are already as many bad men and brigands in the Van Vilayet as he can do with. He has told the Porte that he declines to have him in this vilayet, and suggested that he and his men should be sent to some place in the interior, such as Mardin. It is possible that the influence of the Mushir at Erzinjan may be thrown into the scale against the Vali, as he does not like to be any opportunity of enrolling himself.

I understand that Jafer Agha's men made a good fight against the troops of the Persian Government, and that they captured the two guns which were

sent against them. His rival and enemy, Musto, Chief of the Kerdar section (see my No. 30 of the 1st September, 1903), is at present in possession of Jafer's fortress at Chabri. This does not improve matters, as far as the tranquillity of the frontier is concerned, one being as big a brigand as the other.

These facts and the correspondence are, I think, only interesting as part of the record of Kurdish affairs on the frontier, and as showing the exaggerated notion of their own importance possessed by these petty chieftains, and how they think that foreign Powers may be induced to take sides in their quarrels, for some political reason of their own.

I am informed that Jafer Agha has been intriguing with a Russian Consul in Persia, but whether it is he of Tabreez or Erind, I can not say.

I hope that my answer to Jafer Agha meets with your approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 93.

Jafer Agha to Vice-Consul Tyrrell.

(Translation.)

FOR some time I have remained without news of your honoured health and safety (except) to this extent, that according to hearsay you had gone to the region of Mush, and having been looking for a result to the Petition I had presented, no sign or intelligence has been (received by me), and this is not worthy of the reputation of an English Representative. No effect has been observed from the presentation of a telegram which I laid before the English Emperor; perhaps if you do not forward my request and "give me an" answer, I will make a complaint about you. It is necessary that in this connection you send news to Constantinople, and I, myself, would have come in person to the protection of the British Consulate, but, owing to the severity of the winter, I was not able to prove (this intention) in person, nor, owing to my ruined state, to come to your presence; and if you ask why I again went back to Persia (I reply) having been left without intelligence from the Persian Government, it was not possible to return. I presented a Petition to Constantinople through the Vali of Bitlis, and, moreover, they accepted my Petition, but the Vali of Van and the Mutessarif of Bashkala having taken bribes and adopted an obstructive attitude, delayed the fulfilment of the order of the Government towards me. At length, having remained inactive till the arrival of winter, more than 250 of my men were caused to die and remained under the snow. Helpless, I came to Persian territory.

Now you are a Government official, it is necessary for you to try and obtain a result of the communications and news contained in this telegram or mine, both from the English and Ottoman Governments. Whoever they wish me to do, wherever it may be arranged or desired (for me to go) I will come with you. Praise be to God! No doubt the mighty English Government, being powerful, can again take my land from the Persian Government, or let it cause a place of settlement (to be given me) through the Turkish Government. Or, if these things may not be, let it be (somewhere) in its own territory, then the whole of us may go there. As I have served the Persian Government for some years, so I will faithfully serve the mighty English Government for some years.

(Signed) JAFER TAYYAR,
Chief of the Shekak Tribe.

January 13, 1905.

Inclosure 3 in No. 93.

Telet Telegram from Jafer Agha intended for transmission to the King.

(Translation.)

FOR many years my ancestors, being Chief of the tribes of the Shekak tribe, have been famous. My father and I have been in Persian territory, and it is well known that I never drew back in any way from my duties to the Persian

Government. The control of that part of the Shekak tribe which is in the Province of Azerbaijan and the district of Chahri was allotted to me by the Persian Government, and from time to time I was the recipient of jewelled swords and various kinds of decorations from the Persian Government on account of my service and faithfulness on the frontier; and this year, without cause, a large army with guns was sent against me by the Persian Government. After some days' fighting, the loss which I sustained from [the action of] the Persian Government was more than 10,000*l*. With a few families of my tribe I abandoned my home, and, helpless, migrated. On account of the unreliability of the telegraph offices and of the local Governments on the Turkish frontier, I forwarded a petition to His Majesty the Sultan Abdul Hamid through the Vali of Bitlis. Orders for the acceptance of my submission and for our settlement were issued by the Government.

The Vali of Van and the Muessarif of Hakkari, having taken bribes from certain officials, did not give effect to the orders of the Government, and left me with my tribe in the summer pastures on the frontier. 250 of my men have died from the rigours of the winter; we have not been able to bury many of them, and even now some of our corpses have remained under the snow. Now we have remained helpless and without means of support between the two Powers (Turkey and Persia), and I have remained, without remedy. These few words of petition from your servant I have presented through Captain Tyrrell, British Consul at Van, to the glorious capital of England. If God wills, doubtless my petition will be accepted and fulfilled. The English Government is so powerful and able that it will command our unhindered settlement, either by the Persian Government or else in the territory of the Ottoman Government. If these things may not be, let us be settled in the territory of the English Government. Be pleased to command an answer to the petition of your servant through the Van Consul, Captain Tyrrell.

(Signed) JAFER TAYYAR,
Chief of the tribe of Persian Shekaks.

January 13, 1905.

Inclosed in No. 93.

Reply to Jafar Agha's Letters.

To Jafar Agha, Chief of the Shekak tribe:—

Owing to my having been away in Mush, I have only lately received your two letters, the last of which, with a telegram, was brought by the hand of Ahmed Sherif.

On account of our friendship I am grieved at the distressed state revealed by a study of your second letter.

I cannot forward your telegram, as I do not consider it a part of my duty to do so; and I would advise you not to waste your time and money in complaining of my refusal to do so, as the British Government does not consider complaints of this sort against its officials.

For the sake of our friendship I have spoken unofficially to the Vali here and to the Persian Consul-General; and in the name of humanity I will do all I can to help people who are suffering.

The question of your settlement in Osmani territory is the business of the Vali alone, and that of your return to Chahri is only referable to the Persian Government.

You mentioned your intention of seeking the protection of this Consulate. If you should come merely for the renewing of our acquaintance and for a friendly visit I shall be pleased to see you; but I cannot receive refugees, or people who come on any political pretext.

Still, I repeat that, for the reasons given above, I shall always be glad to do anything I can for you in an unofficial and private way.

(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

February 3, 1905.

No. 94.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 6.)

(No. 28.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran March 6, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram also repeated to India.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 8 of the 10th February.

I find that I was correct in my conjecture that the Hashmat-ul-Mulk had raised money from the Russian Bank. To meet further demands made on him by the Persian Government, he is now borrowing another \$30*l*. from the Imperial Bank. As he has to find the money to-day, I have taken the responsibility of saying that the Legation will guarantee it, and I hope your Lordship will approve. I do not think we ought to allow him to get deeper into Russian debt, as he certainly would do if I refused, or said I must refer the question to London. He has plenty of money, and if necessary we may be able to use his debt to the Imperial Bank as a lever in our dealings with him, as also with the Persian Government. It should be possible to arrange later the apportionment of liability between the Imperial and Indian Exchequers.

No. 95.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 7.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 6th March, relative to the Seistan Water Award.

India Office, March 7, 1905.

Inclosed in No. 95.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

March 6, 1905.

PLEASE refer to the telegram dated the 1st March, from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran. McMahon has been told that he may deliver Water Award when he thinks it advisable to do so. Award will be explained to Ameer by Dane, if, before leaving Cabul, he receives information from McMahon, who is to communicate with him direct immediately Award is issued.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 96.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 8.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta, dated the 2nd February, relative to the Seistan Arbitration Mission.

India Office, March 7, 1905.

Inclosed 1 and 2 in No. 96.

[Not printed.]

Enclosure 3 in No. 96.

Arbitral Award on the Seistan Water Question.

Full Text of Colonel McMahon's Draft (B).

Preliminary Remarks.

GENERAL Sir Frederick Goldsmid, as Arbitrator between Persia and Afghanistan, was called upon to settle the question of rights to land and water of Persia and Afghanistan in Seistan. He delivered an Arbitral Award on both points in 1872, which was confirmed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and accepted by the Persian and Afghan Governments in 1873.

2. At the time of the above Award the Helmand River had one main distributary channel in Seistan, i.e., the Rud-i-Seistan, at the mouth of which, in order to divert sufficient water into this Rud, was a tamarisk band known as the Band-i-Kohak, or the Band-i-Seistan. The Helmand River from thence onwards flowed in one channel past Nad Ali, and along what is now known as the Sikhsar into the Naizar and Hamun. In 1896 a large flood caused the river to burst out for itself a new main channel, which left the old one near Shahgul, and is now known as the Rud-i-Parina.

3. Various disputes regarding water between Persian and Afghan Seistan, which were caused by changes in the course of canals and in the course of the main river, have arisen since 1872. My inquiries show that these have until recently always been mutually and amicably settled by the responsible officials concerned on both sides, i.e., the Governors of Seistan and Chikansar. These officials, who thoroughly understood each other's water requirements, have always shown great tact and skill in settling water disputes to the mutual satisfaction of both countries.

4. This satisfactory state of affairs might have continued indefinitely, but during the last few years outside influences have found their way into Seistan, which have hindered the independent settlement of disputes; and by estranging the relations between the peoples concerned have rendered amicable and mutual settlement of water difficulties no longer possible.

5. A series of small, and in themselves unimportant, water questions arose between 1900 and 1902, which, by reason of estranged relations, caused misunderstanding and increased ill-feeling, until matters were brought to a crisis by further disputes arising from abnormal deficiency of water in the Helmand in 1902. This led to the present reference to the arbitration of the British Government.

6. The condition under which the present arbitration has been agreed to by the Governments of Persia and Afghanistan is that the Award should be in accordance with the terms of Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award.

7. In framing my Award I am therefore restricted by the above condition.

8. Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award on the water question was as follows:—

"It is to be clearly understood that no works are to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the requisite supply of irrigation on both banks of the Helmand."

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in his capacity as the final confirming authority of that Award,† further laid down, in 1873, as follows:—

"In our opinion, the clause referred to in the Award cannot be understood as applying either to existing canals or to such old and disused canals as the Afghan Government may wish to put in proper repair, nor would it int. it with the excavation of new canals, provided the requisite supply of water for irrigation on the Persian side is not diminished."

* The Government of India would insert McMahon's paragraph 4, and would insert the following words at the beginning of paragraph 5:—"The fortification of most of the fortifications have been the cause, and whether this was due to the change in the course of the river, or to the change in the relations, the maintenance of the water rights has been a matter of no longer possible."

† After the word "Award" the Government of India would insert the following:—"After consulting the local authorities, the Government of India would insert the following:—"The Award is to be understood to apply either to existing canals or to such old and disused canals as the Afghan Government may wish to put in proper repair, provided the requisite supply of water for irrigation on the Persian side is not diminished."

It is hardly necessary to point out that this ruling of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, while defining certain limits for Afghan works, does not restrict the Afghan right, stated by Sir Frederick Goldsmid, to a requisite supply of water also for Afghan cultivation.

9. The above Award is so definite that it is unnecessary to make any attempt to define it further, except on one particular point. This Award provides that Persia has a right to a requisite supply of water for irrigation. In order to prevent future misunderstanding, it only remains to define what amount of water fairly represents a requisite supply for Persian requirements.

10. From the careful and exhaustive measurements, observations, and inquiries made by this Mission in Seistan, the following facts have been clearly established:—

(a.) Seistan suffers more from excess than deficiency of water. Far more loss is caused by damage done to lands and crops year after year by floods than is caused by want of water for irrigation.

(b.) In only very exceptional abnormal years of low river has any question of sufficiency of water arisen in Seistan, and then Afghan Seistan has suffered equally with Persian Seistan. Moreover, questions as to the sufficiency of water only prove serious when the spring crop cultivation is concerned, when the river is at its lowest, i.e., between the autumn and spring equinoxes, yet it has been ascertained that only in three out of the past thirty-five years has there been any serious deficiency of water in Seistan during that season. It is necessary, therefore, first to consider water requirements during the season of spring crops. Any settlement based on the requirements of that season will meet the case of the remainder of the year also.

(c.) After carefully calculating the normal volume of the Helmand River during the period between the autumn equinox and the spring equinox, it has been clearly ascertained that one-third of the water which now reaches Seistan at *Bandar-i-Kamal Khan** would amply suffice for the proper irrigation of all existing cultivation in Persian Seistan, and also allow of a large future extension of that cultivation. This would also have a requisite supply for all Afghan requirements.

11. I therefore give the following Award:—

Award.

1. No irrigation works are to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the requisite supply of water for irrigation on both banks of the river, but both sides have the right, within their own territories, to maintain existing canals, to open out old or disused canals, and to make new canals from the Helmand River, provided that the supply of water requisite for irrigation on both sides is not diminished.

2. The amount of water requisite for irrigation of Persian lands irrigable from and below the Band-i-Kohak is one-third of the whole volume of the Helmand River which enters Seistan.

† Seistan, to which Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award applies, comprises all lands on both banks at the Helmand from *Bandar-i-Kamal Khan* downwards.

(3.) Persia is, therefore, entitled to one-third of the whole Helmand River calculated at the point where water is first taken off from it to irrigate lands on either bank situated at or below *Bandar-i-Kamal Khan*.

(4.) Any irrigation works constructed by Afghanistan to divert water into Seistan lands, as above defined, must allow of at least one-third of the volume of the whole river being available for Persian use at *Band-i-Kohak*.

5. To enable both sides to satisfy themselves that this Award is being complied with, and at the same time to avoid the necessity of fresh references to the Government of India, and the expense of special Missions permanently attached to His Majesty's Consulate in Seistan, a British officer of irrigation experience should be appointed as permanent Arbitrator in Seistan. He will be empowered to give an opinion, when required by either party, on any case of doubt or dispute over water questions that may arise. He will, when necessary, take steps to bring the real facts of any case to the notice of the Government concerned. He will be able also to call the attention of either party to any important indications of threatening danger to their water supply arising from natural causes or their own irrigation works. To enable this officer to properly

* The Government of India would insert the following:—"The Award is to be understood to apply either to existing canals or to such old and disused canals as the Afghan Government may wish to put in proper repair, provided the requisite supply of water for irrigation on the Persian side is not diminished."

† The Government of India would insert the following:—"The Award is to be understood to apply either to existing canals or to such old and disused canals as the Afghan Government may wish to put in proper repair, provided the requisite supply of water for irrigation on the Persian side is not diminished."

fulfil the functions of his office, free access should be given to him, by either side, to the Helmand River and its branches and the heads of canals leading therefrom.

6. The maintenance of the Band-i-Kohak is of great importance to the welfare of Persian Seistan. It is possible that the deepening of the river-bed at and below the site of the present band may necessitate moving the band a short distance further up the river. Afghanistan should allow Persia to move this band, if necessary, and grant Persia the right to excavate the short canal required from such new band through Afghan territory to the Rud-i-Seistan. Similarly, should it become necessary for Afghanistan to move the present Shaligul band across the Rud-i-Pariun somewhat lower down that stream, Persia should (as has been done before) allow Afghanistan right of way for a canal through Persian territory from that band to the Nad Ali channel.

7. It will be noted that the rights to the Helmand water, which her geographical position naturally gives to Afghanistan, as owner of the Upper Helmand, have been restricted to the extent stated above in favour of Persia in accordance with Sir Frederick Goldsmid's Award. It follows, therefore, that Persia has no right to alienate to any other Power the water rights thus acquired without the consent of Afghanistan.

8. I cannot close this Award without a word of warning to both countries concerned. The past history of the Helmand River in Seistan shows that it has always been subject to sudden and important changes in its course, which have from time to time diverted the whole river into a new channel, and rendered useless all the then existing canal systems. Such changes are liable to occur in the future, and great care should, therefore, be exercised in the opening out of new canals or the enlargement of old canals leading from the Helmand. Unless this is done with proper precaution, it may cause the river to divert itself entirely at such points, and cause great loss to both countries. This danger applies equally to Afghanistan and Persia.

No. 97.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 8.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosure in a letter from the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta, dated the 2nd ultimo, relative to robberies near Kerman.

India Office, March 7, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 97.

Major P. M. Sykes to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Baru, January 21, 1905.

ROBBERIES occurring close to Kerman. On 17th (telegraph) Ghoian reports forty-three people stripped Robat, 30 miles west Kerman. Netbid, 40 miles east, infested by second gang, which closes road. Governor pays no pay to troops, and Baluchistan already out of hand. Unless strong steps be speedily taken, all trade must cease. Both robberies reported Tehran; but as these districts hitherto quite safe, situation serious. Many districts deserted owing to oppression of Governor's brothers.

No. 98.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 29.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 8, 1905.

UNFRIENDLY acts of the Persian Government.

Following repeated to India.

I am reporting fully by messenger leaving to-day on Government of India's

despatch, just received. Cases mentioned arise partly from Persian Government's incompetence and effete ness, and partly from its somewhat feeble attempts to pursue a centralising policy and to assert its authority to detriment of interests of foreigners. They do not, however, in my opinion, indicate any special or deliberate unfriendliness to His Majesty's Government. Every other Legation here in proportion to the importance of its interests has similar complaints to make.

I think, however, like the Government of India, that we must insist on satisfaction, and we have already had our way in some of the cases. Use of force, or failing this continuous diplomatic pressure of a more or less threatening nature is the only means. Little effect is produced by diplomatic representations, however strongly worded they may be.

No. 99.

Sir C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 9.)

(No. 162.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, March 5, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith translation of a communication which has been made to the "Novoe Vremya" by the Persian Legation here, contradicting a report which had been published by the St. Petersburg Telegraphic Agency, that the Persian Government was in negotiation with the British Government for the advance of a considerable loan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 99.

Extract from the "Novoe Vremya" of March 5, 1905.

THE Persian Legation begs us to publish the following statement:—

The Persian Legation in St. Petersburg contradicts the information communicated by the St. Petersburg Telegraphic Agency from Tiflis as to negotiations with a view to the conclusion of a considerable loan being carried on between the Persian and British Governments. Such intelligence is a fabrication, as no idea of negotiating any considerable loan is entertained at Tehran.

No. 100.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 9.)

Sir,

India Office, March 8, 1905.

WITH reference to Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 13th February, transmitting Sir A. Hardinge's views respecting quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to inclose, for the information of the Marquess of Lansdowne, copies of telegrams which have passed between this Office and the Government of India on the subject.

I am to add that Mr. Brodrick concurs in Lord Lansdowne's proposal to approve the course suggested by Sir A. Hardinge in his despatch No. 295 of the 30th December last.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 100.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, February 16, 1905.

QUARANTINE arrangements in Gulf and at Kermanshah. Your telegram of the 27th October.

In despatch dated the 30th December last His Majesty's Minister at Tehran deprecates our raising the question of the control of quarantine arrangements at ports in Persian Gulf; he considers it unlikely that question will again be raised by Persian Government. As regards Kermanshah, Sir A. Hardinge would be satisfied for control there to be left in the hands of M. Molitor. Exclusive control at that place could not, Hardinge thinks, be claimed by us, having regard to the action which he took last spring on the question of giving Russian doctor control there. Foreign Office propose that Hardinge's suggestions should be agreed to.

Inclosure 2 in No. 100.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

February 24, 1905.

PERSIAN Gulf quarantine arrangements. Your telegram of the 16th instant.

As regards Kermanshah, we recognize the difficulties which His Majesty's Minister points out, stand in the way of our claiming exclusive control. As regards arrangements at Gulf ports generally, we agree that it is not necessary for us to raise the question, so long as our control of them remains undisturbed by Persian Government.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 101.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 9.)

Sir,

India Office, March 8, 1905.

WITH reference to Sir A. Hardinge's despatch No. 11, Confidential, of the 6th January last, inclosing a copy of a letter which he had addressed on the same date to the Government of India regarding the Mirjawa boundary question, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to transmit, for the information of the Marquess of Lansdowne, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy expressing the views of the Government of India on the subject.

It will be seen that the Government of India reluctantly acquiesce in Sir A. Hardinge's view as to the inexpediency of pressing for the line recommended by Colonel MacMahon, and that they are willing that Sir A. Hardinge's alternative proposal should be adopted.

This proposal, Mr. Brodrick understands, is to suggest to the Persian Government that, in the event of their meeting our views as regards Seistan affairs, that is to say, regarding the case of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk and the question of the export of grain, we on our side should be prepared to withdraw Colonel MacMahon's Mission without exposing the Persian Government and ourselves to the trouble and expense of a delimitation at Mirjawa. The boundary would, in that case, be the stream flowing between Mirjawa and Padaha, the former place remaining on the Persian, the latter on the British side. The Government of India, it will be seen, attach much importance to the satisfactory settlement of the question regarding the supply of water and provisions to the Padaha post.

Mr. Brodrick concurs in the views of the Government of India; and he would suggest that, if Lord Lansdowne sees no objection, Sir A. Hardinge might be instructed to endeavour to arrange a settlement on this basis.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 101.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

February 27, 1905.

PERSO-BALUCH boundary.

Please refer to papers inclosed with letters from Foreign Secretary, dated the 19th January and the 2nd February, and to my telegram of the 3rd January. It is very desirable that early decision should be arrived at as to section of boundary lying between Koh-i-Malik Shah and Hoddich's Pillar No. 11; pending settlement of this question, delivery of Seistan Water Award is being deferred by MacMahon.

We should like to press for the recognition by Persian Government of MacMahon's red line. Having regard, however, to the difficulties which Sir A. Hardinge foresees in getting the Persian Government to agree to MacMahon's line, it may be considered wiser to adopt the alternative course proposed in the telegram dated the 3rd January from Hardinge to MacMahon.

It will probably be necessary for us to establish a levy post at Rohat, for purposes of observation, when the Mission is withdrawn. Removal of restrictions on export of grain from Seistan is a matter of great importance, and it is essential to settlement that Persian Government should give formal consent to our obtaining supplies from Ladis, and to our taking water from Mirjawa for post at Padaha. It is understood, of course, that if Mirjawa question is settled on these lines the question of boundary in these parts will not be revived by Persian Government.

I should be glad that instructions in this sense should be sent to Hardinge, if you agree in the view expressed above.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 102.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 9.)

Sir,

India Office, March 8, 1905.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 25th February, transmitting the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown upon the questions submitted to them regarding the pearl fisheries in the Persian Gulf.

In reply I am to inclose the draft of a despatch which, subject to Lord Lansdowne's concurrence, Mr. Brodrick proposes to address to the Government of India on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 102.

Draft of despatch from Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

ON receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 10th March, 1904, on the question of the pearl fisheries in the Persian Gulf, I entered into communication with the Foreign Office with a view to obtaining the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown upon the legal and international points raised by your Excellency's Government.

I inclose herewith, for the information and guidance of the Government of India, a copy of the correspondence.

Your Excellency will see that the Law Officers of the Crown have no doubt as to the rights of the tribes in such waters as may justly be considered territorial. Outside territorial waters they are inclined to hold that the exclusive rights of the tribes might be maintained to banks in regard to which their exclusive possession is capable of historical proof; but they consider that the point is not free from

doubt. In regard to the deeper waters, they are of opinion that there would be no reasonable chance of asserting with success the right of the tribes to debar other nations from dredging.

In these circumstances I agree with the general conclusion at which the Law Officers of the Crown have arrived, viz., that it is not expedient to raise the question internationally by forcibly preventing vessels of foreign nationalities from fishing on the banks. The object in view may probably be attainable by indirect methods.

No. 103.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 9.)

(No. 30. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 9, 1905.

RUSSIAN military proposals.

I am informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Persian Minister at St. Petersburg has been instructed to explain to Russian Government that compliance with their demands is impossible, as they are inconsistent with the independence of the State. The Mashir-ed-Dowleh has added that a Secret Agreement, which was proposed by the Russian Government, is quite out of the question, as information as to the proposals has reached His Majesty's Legation, who have informed him that they will oppose them.

(Above repeated to India.)

No. 104.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 25.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, March 11, 1905.

WITH reference to the telegram from the Viceroy of the 27th ultimo, on the subject of the Mirjawa boundary, a settlement on the basis therein mentioned should be arranged, if possible.

No. 105.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 11, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a telegram from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran,* reporting that he has guaranteed a loan of 830*l.* made by the Imperial Bank of Persia to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

Lord Lansdowne proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the action taken by Sir A. Hardinge in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GORST.

No. 106.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 32.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 13, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram repeated to India.

Please refer to the Government of India's despatch of the 22nd December last.

As compliance with our demands respecting (1) Urmia incidents, (2) Attack on Douglas and Lorimer, and (3) Hashmat-ul-Mulk, are being evaded by the Persian

* No. 94.

Government, I propose to apply pressure as suggested in my telegram of the 8th March, No. 29, last paragraph.

As the Persian Ministers put forward the Shah's objections as their excuse, I have asked for an audience of His Majesty, but if this proves ineffectual, inasmuch as it would presumably be inconvenient in the present juncture of Asiatic politics, to use force, such as the dispatch of ships to enforce our rights to the Persian Gulf, I would propose that we should inform the Persian Government of our intention to settle these questions for ourselves on the following basis:—

Claims on account of attack on Douglas and Urmia murders: these we shall pay ourselves, recovering amount plus interest from Persian Government by appropriating Royalty payable under Article II of Convention of 1868, on account of Jask. This amounts to 600*l.* per annum, and as our total claim, charging 1,000*l.* on account of Daniel murder, which we could reduce if advisable, we should thus sequester royalty for from five to six years.

With regard to Seistan, I propose that until we are given adequate securities for our interests, (1) to retain them, for their protection, if necessary, on analogy of Russian Commission at Gumbad-i-Kubooq, MacMahon, or whoever relieves him with his escort; and (2), to decline any further discussion as to the boundary at Mirjawa, and to reserve and exercise our right to occupy in that region such places as we deem ourselves entitled by our own interpretation of the Hoidieh Agreement to hold, in other words, to adopt MacMahon's red line, if we choose, (3) to withdraw our conditional offers of financial assistance on account of the Ahwaz Dam scheme, and to inform them that we shall take such steps as we considered requisite to prevent such assistance from being elsewhere obtained. We can effectively do this; even Russia would probably find it impracticable, and no Belgian or Dutch Syndicate would care to invest money in it in face of our avowed opposition or that of the Sheikh of Mohammerrah and the Arabs, if we backed them up.

I am informing Grand Vizier that on account of his bad faith, I regard as cancelled my promise (see my despatch No. 105 of the 3rd September), to recommend Ahwaz scheme to the favourable consideration of His Majesty's Government.

In these matters the Persian Government is less unfriendly than feeble, impoverished, and therefore dilatory; but it can afford to give us satisfaction if it makes an effort, and in thinking that the time has now come when we should force it to do so, I share the opinion of the Government of India.

As the sooner I now act the better, I would request your Lordship, should you approve this course, to give me an answer as soon as possible.

No. 107.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 10.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1905.

I HAVE considered, in consultation with the Secretary of State for India, your despatch No. 235 of the 30th December, 1904, on the subject of quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf.

I approve your proposal not to revert to the question unless it is raised by the Persian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 108.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject of the recent attack by Direkward Lars on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.*

It will be observed that the Firman Firna is organizing an expedition for the punishment of the offending tribe, and that Sir A. Hardinge considers that, if he fails,

* No. 79.

the task must be intrusted either to the Bakhtiari Chiefs or to the Ala-ed-Dowleh. Lord Lansdowne would be glad to be favoured with the views of the Secretary of State for India on this subject.

His Lordship proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the terms of the note addressed by Sir A. Hardinge to the Persian Government regarding the compensation to be paid to Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 109.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 17.)

Sir, *India Office, March 16, 1905.*
I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, in which you ask for Mr. Brodrick's views on the question of the incidence of the liability for the compensation to be awarded to Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas and Lieutenant Lorimer on account of the attack to which they were subjected while travelling in Luristan.

In reply I am to say that the Secretary of State in Council is prepared to accept a liability upon the Indian Exchequer for one-half of the expenditure on account of the actual losses and expenses incurred, in the event of its proving impossible to recover the amount from the Persian Government.

I am to add that, should either or both of these officers make good his claim to a wound pension under the military Regulations on account of his wounds received on this occasion, the Secretary of State in Council assumes that the charge of such pension will be treated on the same principle as the expenditure now under consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

No. 110.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 42.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 17, 1905.*
I HAVE received your despatches No. 17 of the 31st January and No. 22 of the 7th February last, forwarding reports from His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan of his recent visit to the Bakhtiari Chiefs.

I concur in your approval of the good work done by Mr. Pearce on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 111.

Persian Office to Persian Transport Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 17, 1905.*
WITH reference to your letters of the 7th and 8th December, 1904, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be submitted to the Persian Transport Company, extracts from two despatches from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject of the Ahwaz-Ispahan road and the Company's accounts with the Bakhtiari Chiefs.*

It will be observed that His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan, who has recently visited the Bakhtiari country, has concluded an arrangement with the Chiefs, by which the latter undertake to pay the Company 3,000 tomans for immediate repairs to the road on the 21st May next and an annual sum of 1,000 tomans for its upkeep. The Chiefs ask, however, that this expenditure should be supervised by a representative of His Majesty's Government, or that they should be able to withhold payment in the

* Extracts from Sir A. Hardinge, Nos. 17 and 22 of the 31st January and 7th February, 1905.

event of their being of opinion that the money had not been properly expended. Sir A. Hardinge suggests that His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz should be directed to include among his regular duties a supervision of the annual expenditure on the upkeep of the road. Lord Lansdowne sees no objection to instructing the British Consul at Ahwaz accordingly, and I am to inquire whether the Transport Company are prepared to agree to this arrangement.

As regards the repayment of the capital sum expended on the road, it will be seen that His Majesty's Minister considers that it would be impossible to induce the Chiefs to accept a sterling standard as the basis of the transaction. Lord Lansdowne concurs in this opinion, and sees no reason to modify the view expressed in the letters from this Department of the 15th May, 1903, and 12th February of last year. His Lordship would be glad to learn whether the Company desire an intimation to be conveyed to the Chiefs, as suggested in the final paragraph of Sir A. Hardinge's despatch of the 7th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GORST.

No. 112.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 18.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 17th instant, relative to Persian telegraphs.

India Office, March 18, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 112.

Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

(Telegraphic.) P.

March 17, 1905.

PLEASE refer to your telegram of the 16th November, 1904. I have received a telegram, dated the 13th instant, from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, to the effect that, in view of the concessions with regard to Russian signallers on the Meshed-Seistan telegraph line, which have now been granted in consequence of the financial pressure which has recently been brought to bear upon the Persian Government by the Russians in connection with military proposals, he proposes to demand from the Persian Government equal facilities for English telegraphists who is to be sent to Turbat, and employment of English signallers, if required by us, at every place between Meshed and Seistan, in the same manner as Russian signallers are employed, or, as an alternative, the removal of the Russians.

This demand, which I understand Sir A. Hardinge means to prefer at once, is practically identical with that which His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in November 1904 announced intention of making, vide the formal note addressed to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on the 19th November, 1904 in accordance with Lord Lansdowne's instructions. I would invite a reference to the telegram from Lord Ampthill of the 1st November, 1901, and would strongly urge that present opportunity should be taken to press the Persian Government to agree to the linking up of line from Henjam to Bander-Abbas and from Koh-i-malik Siah to Nasratabad.

(Repeated to Tehran.)

No. 113.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 34.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 18, 1905.

TELEGRAPH questions in Persia.

Please refer to telegram from Government of India of the 17th instant to Secretary of State for India.

Following telegram repeated to India:-

"I spoke three days ago to Mushir-ed-Dowleh on this subject. His Excellency told me that, for a long time, Russian signaller at Turbat-i-Haidari had been allowed to transmit messages for the quarantine cordon in the Russian language, but not to receive them for the public. Persian Government would stop the practice if he were now doing this. Russian demands, he added, respecting telegraphists at other places in Khorassan were still being resisted by the Persian Government. I am, however, addressing him officially to demand that any concessions which may be made to Russians may similarly be granted to us also.

"Bunder Abbas-Henjam extension has been agreed to by Persian Government, and I shall discuss with the Minister of Telegraphs, as soon as holidays of Moharrem are over, precise method of carrying it into execution. Their idea is to build the line themselves, with the help of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, but probably they will find it hard to pay for it in their present circumstances.

"If thought advisable I can press for the extension to Nasratabad, but I am certain that the Shah will prove unyielding on this point.

"The pressure exerted by the Russian Government on behalf of the military proposals is, so far, being resisted by them with considerable firmness. Finding the Ain-ed-Dowleh obstinate, the Russian Minister had a private audience of the Shah three days ago, but only got vague assurances from him. His Majesty showed ill-temper after he left, and declared that he would concede nothing to Russia, in the presence of several persons."

No. 114.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 18, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the subject of the Henjam-Bunder Abbas telegraph extension.*

Lord Lansdowne proposes, if Mr. Brodrick concurs, to approve the terms of the note which Sir A. Hardinge has addressed to the Persian Government on this subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 115.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Harding.

(No. 27.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, March 20, 1905.

YOU are authorized to make an advance—not exceeding Rs. 421. 10s.—to Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer for the losses sustained by them in the recent attack in Laristan, referred to in your telegram No. 12 of the 10th ultimo.

No. 116.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 20, 1905.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant relative to the question of the Persian Gulf Pearl Fisheries.

I am to inform you that his Lordship concurs in the terms of the draft despatch which Mr. Secretary Brodrick proposes to address to the Government of India on this subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 117.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—Received March 22.)

(No. 35.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 22, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram repeated to Colonel MacMahon and to Viceroy of India.

In a long interview which I have just had with the Ain-ed-Dowleh, I proposed settlement on the following basis of Seistan and frontier questions:—

1. Kain to be given to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, and Seistan to another Governor acceptable to us.

2. In return for abandonment by us of Mirjavar delimitation, an agreement to be made for the regular supply of provisions for our posts.

To (1) the Grand Vizier objected that he wanted to unite Kain and Seistan into a single province directly subject to Tehran, and with a new Governor independent of Meshed, who, I suspect, will be either the Mustansir-ul-Mulk or the Yamin-i-Nizam, with the brother of the Shaikat-ul-Mulk and the son of the Hashmat as his deputies respectively at Birjand and Nasratabad. He pledged himself, however, eventually to give either Tabas or Seistan proper (Persian Government will most likely prefer the former) to the Hashmat as a separate Government.

In principle he agreed to (2), but requested further details; I said I would supply these if I heard that you would agree to this compromise, but I reminded him that my orders from you were to insist that Seistan should be given to the Hashmat. The latter would accept Kain, but Tabas would not be so attractive. I understand, however, that both the Mustansir and the Yamin are now regarded as friendly by our local officers.

By sustained pressure I am making a little progress in the other questions dealt with in my telegram No. 32 of the 13th instant. The Grand Vizier admits that we have been forbearing, but begs me not to add to his difficulties during his present struggle with the Russian Government. His position is precarious, and to secure it he seems to have agreed to take the Shah to Europe, though he had been long opposed to the tour on public grounds.

No. 118.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta, dated the 23rd February, relative to the murder of a British-Indian subject by inhabitants of Sirri Island.

India Office, March 22, 1905.

Inclosure 1 in No. 118.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bushire, February 7, 1905.

PLEASE see your despatch dated the 22nd July, 1904, to the Government of India, and connected correspondence regarding the ownership of the Sirri Island. The inhabitants of this island have murdered a British-Indian subject at sea, and the murderers are in the custody of the Deputy Governor of Lingah. Please inform me whether I should demand their punishment as Persian subjects from the Governor of Bushire.

(Addressed to His Britannic Majesty's Minister, Tehran, and repeated to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 118.

Government of India to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, February 17, 1905.

PLEASE refer to Major Cox's telegram of the 7th instant. We think that he should address Governor pointing out that as the Governor is no doubt aware the question of ownership of Sirri has been under discussion between the British and Persian Governments; that in the present case a British subject has been murdered, and as the criminals are actually on Persian soil and in Persian custody, it is assumed without prejudice to the larger issue that the men will be promptly and adequately dealt with by the Persian Government.

(Repeated to Major Cox.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 118.

Sir A. Hardinge to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 19, 1905.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 6th instant, I am addressing the Persian Government in a sense which is identified with the representations which you are desired to make to the Governor of Bushire by the Government of India.

(Addressed to Major Cox, Bushire, and repeated to the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta.)

No. 119.

Persian Transport Company to Foreign Office.—(Received March 23.)

3, Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,
March 22, 1905.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th March, having reference to the road across the Bakhtiyari country. In reply I am instructed by my Board to inform you that the question of the sterling basis of the capital sum expended on the road will receive their further attention, and that their present reply has reference merely to the question of repairs to the road. It is not clear from Mr. Preece's despatch whether he includes under these repairs the necessary upkeep of the bridges. The words he uses are (Inclosure 1 in No. 1), "If this sum is expended on the road pure and simple," from which we take it that he refers to the track only. Whether this be the construction or whether he includes the bridges, it is the belief of my Directors that the sums allowed by the Chiefs, viz., 3,000 tomans (500*l.*) for the immediate repairs to the road, and an annual sum of 1,000 tomans for upkeep, will not be nearly sufficient for the purpose; but my Board have succeeded, in response to Mr. Preece's suggestion, in obtaining from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company the loan of one of their engineers, thus saving us the expense of sending out a man for the purpose. We have expressed to the Board of the Euphrates Company our gratitude for this service, which they cannot comply with without considerable inconvenience to themselves. My Board are therefore able to offer to undertake the work, but only on the express condition that it is clearly understood by His Majesty's Government and by the Chiefs that they cannot accept any responsibility whatever for placing or keeping the road in a proper condition of repair for the sums allotted. All they can undertake is to expend these sums to the best possible advantage, and they welcome the proposal favoured by Sir Arthur Hardinge that the expenditure should be supervised by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz. At the same time they beg that instructions should be issued to His Majesty's Vice-Consul to inspect the road after the 3,000 tomans have been expended, and to furnish a report upon the same, it being understood, however, that we shall not be called upon to refund the money after it has once been expended under the supervision of His Majesty's Vice-Consul.

It should be made clear to the Chiefs that it is absolutely necessary that the bridges should be overhauled every year, and painted whenever the engineer considers it necessary, of which he must be the judge. It will, no doubt, save the Chiefs money if this work be conducted in conjunction with the annual repairs to the track, which they have hitherto not permitted us to undertake on their behalf. We are

instructing our agents in this sense, and impressing upon them the necessity of making the upkeep of the bridges their first consideration in the expenditure of the sums allotted.

As regards the money to be paid by the Chiefs at each Nauruz, we must request that it should be paid to our agents at Ahwaz through His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that port, and not through His Majesty's Consul-General at Isfahan as heretofore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK BOTTOMLEY, *Secretary.*

No. 120.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 28.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, March 23, 1905.

I HAVE the following observations to make on the relations of His Majesty's Government with Persia, referred to in your telegrams Nos. 32 and 35 of the 13th and 22nd instant:—

1. We have been considering the question of the Hashmat-ul-Mulk and the proposal originally put forward by the Government of India, in their telegram of the 3rd January last, to obtain another Governorship for the Hashmat, and appoint a Governor acceptable to His Majesty's Government to Seistan. The Defence Committee have been consulted, and it has now been decided that the retention of the Hashmat as Governor of Seistan should not be insisted upon, and that His Majesty's Government do not desire to incur any responsibility for appointing his successor to that post.

We have no objection to your endeavouring to obtain some other Governorship for him, although if the Persian Government prefer Tabas, it seems unnecessary to insist on Kain.

2. The proposal in your telegram No. 35 regarding the arrangement of the Mirjawa boundary is approved. (See my telegram No. 25 of the 11th instant.)

3. It would be preferable that you should continue diplomatic pressure as regards the Urumia and Military Attaché claims before such a strong measure as the sequestration of the Jask Royalty is thought of.

4. You should not commit yourself either way as to the Ahwaz Dam loan, as we shall only consider the scheme on its merits after we have received and considered the engineer's report.

No. 121.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 24.)

Sir,

India Office, March 22, 1905.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to acknowledge receipt of Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 11th instant, and to say, in reply, that he concurs in Lord Lansdowne's proposal to approve the action taken by Sir A. Hardinge in guaranteeing an advance of 830*l.* by the Imperial Bank of Persia to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk.

With reference to the question of the incidence of the liability under this guarantee, Mr. Brodrick adheres to the view stated in the final paragraph of Sir H. Walpole's letter of the 4th February last.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 122.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 36.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 25, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram repeated to Macpherson, Seistan, and to Viceroy of India:—

Hashmat-ul-Mulk. Your telegram No. 28 of the 23rd March.

From the full account of my interview with Grand Vizier, sent by Messenger, you will see that I guarded both my proposals by provision that they were subject to your

approval. I warned him that you might not be able to modify your original demand for the reinstatement of the Hashmat, and that I could not guarantee your accepting the proposed compromise. I can therefore easily explain that you have consented to waive this demand, and that for any consequences which may result from administration of new Governor to be selected by the Shah all responsibility must rest with the Persian Government, and not with us.

I shall endeavour to use this concession as a means of getting other outstanding questions settled, but I must beg your Lordship to bear in mind when it is a question of extracting money from the empty exchequer of Persia, purely diplomatic pressure can bear fruit only very slowly.

No. 123.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 37.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 26, 1905.

FOLLOWING telegram repeated to India:

Your Lordship's telegram of the 9th December, 1904, No. 76.

I have received official notification from Persian Government expressing its willingness to construct telegraph line from Bunder Abbas to Henjam via Kishm itself, with English materials and engineers and to engage no foreigners for the work. They state that there is no necessity for a diplomatic Convention similar to that drawn up for earlier lines under British administration, but Minister for Foreign Affairs is prepared to conclude an agreement with me under which the conditions of employment of our engineers shall be defined.

Agreement has been drafted as follows:—

1. Construction of line having been decided on by Persian Government and provision of engineers and materials by the Indo-European Department having been authorized by the British Government, it is agreed that Department shall provide two European engineers and native staff required, and that two submarine ends shall be laid as soon as possible by telegraph ship.

2. Line shall be handed over to Ministry of Telegraphs on completion and payment of cost of materials and other charges of engineers. Persian Government guarantees payment and charges shall not exceed 75,000 rupees.

3. Declaration of Persian Government that non-Persian subjects shall not be employed in working of line, shall not preclude them from employing such persons in service of Indo-European Department for repairs to cables or other works which the maintenance of the line may require. In this case the Department shall be entitled to charge for these services in the usual manner.

When the actual moment comes for paying the 75,000 rupees I anticipate that the Persian Government may prefer to make some other arrangement by which we will obtain practical control of line on a basis similar to that of the Central Persian Line for sharing receipts. Just now, however, they profess to be able to find the money themselves.

I have shown proposed Agreement to Mr. New who concurs in it. Does your Lordship approve my submitting it to Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

No. 123*.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 38.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 26, 1905.

INCIDENTS at Urmiah.

On the 23rd March the Mullah left Urmiah, and this chapter of the controversy is thus closed.

No. 124.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27)

(No. 32. Secret.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 23, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report herewith further particulars with reference to my telegrams Nos. 14 and 18 of the 16th and 19th instant, respecting the negotiations of the Arfa-ed-Dowleh at St. Petersburg for a Russian advance to the Persian Government and their results. My informant, who wishes his name kept secret, as neither the Grand Vizier nor the Mushir-ed-Dowleh have authorized him to speak to me on the subject, is an important member of the Ministry, and his statement explains certain rumours which had reached me during the past fortnight from two separate confidential Palace sources, but which were lacking in clearness and consistency. His account of these transactions is as follows:—

The Arfa-ed-Dowleh having, as I reported in my despatch No. 162 of the 1st September, 1904, gained the good-will of the Shah and the Grand Vizier by very liberal presents of money, persuaded them to depute him on a Complimentary Mission to St. Petersburg for the purpose of congratulating the Emperor on the birth of the Czarévitch. The idea was to remove any impression that the Arfa-ed-Dowleh was unfriendly to Russia, or that the dismissal of the Atabeg indicated any coldness towards that Power on the part of the Shah, and the Arfa undertook, owing to his personal influence with the Russian Ministers, not merely to dispel all such notions, but to secure for the Persian Government substantial evidences of Russia's good-will. He promised, if the Persian Government should be in need of any financial assistance, either for the Shah's next European tour or in view of the fall of the receipts due to the war and cholera, to obtain it for them at St. Petersburg on the easiest possible terms. The Grand Vizier was by no means enthusiastic about this Mission, for he distrusted the Arfa-ed-Dowleh as a creature of the Atabeg's, but the Arfa talked to him so plausibly and confidently that he ended by giving his consent.

Arrived at St. Petersburg, where he appears to have been cordially received, the Arfa-ed-Dowleh opened the subject of a fresh advance to the Persian Government, a matter very near to his own heart, in view of the large profits which he had made over the first Russian loan, negotiated by him in 1899, for the Atabeg. The Russian Government expressed its readiness to offer the sum of 2,000,000 roubles (100,000,000, or, at the present rate of exchange, 334,000,000), to be advanced to the Persian Government by the Loan and Discount Bank "on account current," a phrase on which the Shah lays great stress, as he thinks that he guards by it against financial vassalage, but which in practice means nothing at all, since he is never in a position to repay the capital. In return for this advance the Russian Government would expect that of Persia to carry out the scheme long previously contemplated by it of a reorganization of the Persian army, and to do so in accordance with a plan drawn up by the Commander of the Cossack Brigade, and under the advice and supervision of the Russian Government. The plan in question seems simply to have been the extension to the entire Persian army of the system of the Cossack Brigade, or the reproduction of Cossack brigades at all the principal military centres, with the further provision that a number of new Russian officers and instructors would be engaged for it, and that no foreign officers except Russians should henceforth be employed. As a consequence of this last condition, the proposal which the Persian Government made last year, as reported in my despatch No. 107 of June 16th last, to bring some Austrian instructors, and which M. Vlassoff in Tehran and Count Kapustin in Vienna intimated would be viewed by the Russian Government with disfavour, would of course be abandoned.

The Arfa-ed-Dowleh offered no objection to these conditions. His Government, he said, would be delighted to have the services of more Russian officers, and to reform the army under their auspices. But the Shah and Grand Vizier, suspecting as was the case, thought otherwise. They might have taken the money and have given a vague promise to reform the army in consultation with the Russian Government, with the intention of evading it or explaining it away when the time came, but they strongly objected to the proposed increase of Russian officers. They also declined, having actually engaged the Austrian instructors, to cancel the contracts made with them, and they informed M. de Speyer, who was authorized to conclude the transaction on his arrival here, accordingly. M. de Speyer thereupon declared that if the Austrian officers were engaged the offer of the Russian Bank must be considered as withdrawn, and this

declaration was followed up a few days ago by a formal application by M. Grube to M. Nams for the repayment on or before the 21st proximo of the sum of 512,000 tomans, or, at the present rate of exchange, about \$1,000,000. This sum represents the interest and arrears of payment on what is known as the "floating debt" of the Persian Government to the Russian Bank, the total amount of which equals 1,200,000 tomans, plus the capital and interest of a special advance of 150,000 tomans "on account current" made two years ago to the Atabeg-i-Azam for the army. This "floating debt" includes a variety of small loans contracted by the Atabeg at different periods between the conclusion of the Russian loan of 1902 and his fall in the autumn of 1903, the most important of them being one of 300,000 tomans which was borrowed in the summer of 1903 "on account current" (after I had refused assistance in this form), nominally for paying arrears due to the army, but which was, as a matter of fact, spent by the Shah partly on a tour in the Elburz Mountains, and partly on a new shooting box for His Majesty at Usham. By an agreement concluded in March last, the capital of the "floating debt" was to be redeemed in five years by the payment of a sum of 20,000 tomans per month. Neither this sinking fund nor the interest, which now equals \$4,000 tomans, has apparently been paid between then and now. The Ain-ed-Dowleh, while settling all other claims on the Treasury, deferred till after they were satisfied what he called "the liabilities of the Atabeg-i-Azam," and the Russian Bank, which always subordinates financial to political considerations, preferred not to ask for payment so as to allow the interest to accumulate, and thus preserve a hold on the Persian Government. The Atabeg, as your Lordship is aware, contracted a similar debt to the Imperial Bank of Persia, and the latter, though it claims its interest when it falls due, practically remits it immediately afterwards an equivalent amount, so that the Persian Government's debt to it "on account current," which in April 1901 stood at 200,000, is now, after payment of interest at 12 per cent. for four years, 228,000, or 1,868,000 tomans.

There can therefore be no doubt that the Russian Bank's sudden decision to demand payment within a month, and without a word of warning, of this large sum, which they are aware the Persian Government cannot pay, is intended to force the hand of the Ain-ed-Dowleh, and compel him to submit to the demands of the Russian Government respecting the reorganization of the army, or, at any rate, to abandon the idea of employing Austrian officers, and to show greater deference than he has hitherto done towards Russia. The application of this form of pressure in respect of the Turkish war indemnity is of course a familiar device of Russian diplomacy at Constantinople, and the Ain-ed-Dowleh may have to pay something for its relaxation here. The whole incident is, however, chiefly instructive as affording a further proof that Russia's domestic and Manchurian troubles are not likely to restrain her from pursuing the system of strengthening her position in Persia by political loans. I have, as your Lordship is aware, been always of opinion that the war in the Far East would not affect her activity in this respect, and the personal loan of 80,000, made last year by the Russian Government "on account current," and, without any security, to the Heir Apparent, the opening this winter of Russian banks which can do no business and are really political agencies at Hamadan and Kermanshah, and now this last offer of 2,000,000 tomans clearly demonstrate the correctness of the forecast which I have ventured to submit to you. It must always be remembered that the annual interest on the two great loans of 1900 and 1902, apart from the sinking fund, which repays the actual capital, affords an ample margin for expenditure on fresh political advances and secret service.

I have sounded the Grand Vizier indirectly as to this affair. He has denied that there was ever a question of a Russian loan, but has admitted that the Russian Minister, who had a two hours' interview with him on the 17th inst., has been pressing him very hard about the Austrian officers. He has further stated that there was a possibility that this pressure might be fraught with "somewhat serious developments," which would oblige him to invoke my assistance and advice. He explains that M. de Speyer bases his action on the fact that during the Premiership of the Amin-ed-Dowleh, the Persian Government, when it engaged Belgian officials for the Customs, contemplated at the same time engaging Austrian instructors for the army, that their engagement was abandoned in consequence of objections made by Russia, that the Amin-ed-Dowleh wrote a note to the Russian Legation in which he undertook not to introduce, without informing it, any fresh foreign officers into the Persian army, and that the Russians construe this pledge as giving them a moral right of veto. He adds, however, that the contracts with the Austrian officers, six in number, have been signed, and that he is determined to stand firm and make no further concessions to the Russians. The officers are all on the retired list, and their engagements have been

arranged by the Persian Minister in Vienna without the intervention of the Austrian Government or Legation here, both of which have made it clear that the transaction is an entirely unofficial one, for which they assume no responsibility.

I believe the real facts to have been that when your Lordship let it be known in December 1904 that no financial assistance could be expected for the Shah's European tour the Ain-ed-Dowleh listened to the suggestions of the Arfa-ed-Dowleh that he should procure him such assistance at St. Petersburg, and that the Arfa-ed-Dowleh exceeded his instructions, and, in his anxiety to secure a commission on a new Russian advance, held out hopes to the Russian Government which the Grand Vizier was forced to disappoint, whilst at the same time betraying His Highness' financial embarrassments, and thus affording the Russians the desired leverage for putting pressure on him in connection with their and his military projects.

He assures me that he does not need the money for the Shah's journey (this is, I believe, so far true that it is not absolutely essential to him), but he has asked me whether it would do any harm if, for reasons of temporary convenience, he were to accept a small Russian advance "on account current" provided it were unfettered by conditions. I have warned him that any addition to the country's already unduly heavy debt to Russia would be fraught with danger to Persian interests, would be regarded by your Lordship with strong disapproval, and would probably evoke a protest by the clergy, both in Persia and at Kerbela and Nejed, which might occasion grave internal complications.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 125.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lonsdale.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 31. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Telegram, February 23, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to previous correspondence, a list supplied to me by His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed of the Russian telegraphists and signallers sent by the Russian Government to Meshed and Seistan.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh informed me some time ago that he had prevailed on M. de Speyer to recommend to the Russian Government the withdrawal of the telegraphists, to whom the Persian Government persist in refusing access to its offices on the Meshed-Seistan line, and that he was in hopes that a despatch, which the Russian Legation had been warned to expect in reply from St. Petersburg, would announce that this recommendation had been agreed to. Yesterday he informed me that he had just had an interview with the Russian Minister, who had intimated that the proposal to withdraw the telegraphists had called forth certain objections from the Russian Government, and that the matter could not yet, therefore, be regarded as settled, though the Persian Government still insisted on the position originally taken up by it.

A confidential informant, an Armenian, lately told me that a Russian Armenian merchant, trading with the Russian Bank here, who is a secret member of the Armenian Revolutionary Organization, had reported to him that M. Grube had said in his presence that M. de Speyer had shown weakness in the matter of the telegraphists for Khorassan and Seistan. It is therefore not improbable that M. Grube has reported to the Russian Ministry of Finance in a sense adverse to the recommendations which M. de Speyer promised the Persian Government to make to the Russian Foreign Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 125.

DISTRIBUTION of Russian Signallers on the Meshed-Seistan Persian Telegraph Line, January 1905.

No.	Station.	Name.	Designation.	Nationality.	Pay in Rouble- per month.	Remarks.
1	Mascul	Soltanoff	Telegraphist	Caucasian	200	A nadsnarsnik is an assistant telegraphist. He understands signalling in all out-door construction work, but usually works in one of the office fitting and repairing instruments, &c. On passing an examination he becomes a nadsnarsnik. His pay is 10 roubles in Russia; in Persia he gets double Russian pay, i.e. 20 roubles, and each year's service counts as three years for pension. The grades appear to be:— 1. Chief telegraphist. 2. Telegraphist. 3. Mechanic. 4. Nadsnarsnik.
2	"	Soltanoff	Nadsnarsnik	Russian Mohammedan	120	
3	Turkmenistan	Vadimoff	Chief telegraphist (soldier)	Russian	180	
4	"	Musoff	Telegraphist	Armenian	120	
5	"	Korotkova	Nadsnarsnik	Georgian	120	
6	Kashan	Korotkova	Chief telegraphist	Armenian	120	
7	Kashan	Korotkova	Nadsnarsnik	Armenian	120	
8	"	Korotkova	Telegraphist	Russian	120	
9	"	Korotkova	Chief telegraphist	Armenian	120	
10	"	Korotkova	Nadsnarsnik	Armenian	120	
11	"	Korotkova	Telegraphist	Armenian	120	
12	"	Korotkova	Nadsnarsnik	Armenian	120	
13	"	Korotkova	Telegraphist	Armenian	120	
14	"	Korotkova	Nadsnarsnik	Armenian	120	

No. 126.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne. — (Received March 27.)

(No. 36.)
My Lord,

Tehran, February 24, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 4th instant, copies of further correspondence which has passed between the Minister of Posts and Customs and myself respecting the delivery of mail-bags containing parcels to the Indian post-offices in the Persian Gulf.

I have, as your Lordship will observe, contended throughout that the "Règlement Douanier" accepted by us and modelled by M. Naus' own wishes on that negotiated by him with Russia does not, in the absence of any explicit provisions in that sense, affect the British post-offices in the Gulf, whose existence and functions are not dependent on any Commercial Conventions, and that any new procedure which the Persian authorities may prescribe to these offices in respect to the treatment of the mails, whether containing letters or parcels, must be sanctioned by His Majesty's Government. This is a position which we can easily defend, and can in the last resort forcibly vindicate. But I think M. Naus makes a strong point when he refers to the recent inclusion of Persia among the States sharing in the International Postal Union for parcel-post purposes, and pleads that parcels transmitted to Persia by post, whether through the Persian or through the British post-offices established in Persian territory, should be subject to inspection by the Customs in accordance with the provisions of the "Règlement Douanier."

I am sending the telegram, of which a copy is inclosed herewith, to the Government of India, besides posting to it a copy of this despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 126.

M. Naus to Sir A. Hardinge.

Ministère des Douanes et des Postes, Téhéran,
le 17 Février, 1905.

M. le Ministre,

J'E viens de recevoir du Directeur-Général des Douanes de l'Ambistan un Rapport, dont il résulte que le Consul Anglais de Mohammérah refuse de laisser soumettre les valises postales adressées à l'office postal Anglo-Indien de cette ville à la visite et aux autres formalités Douanières.

La question de l'obligation de la poste Anglaise de se soumettre au Règlement Légal ayant fait l'objet d'une récente correspondance entre la Légation d'Angleterre et l'Administration des Douanes, je ne crois pas nécessaire de rééditer les arguments que j'ai eu l'honneur d'exposer à l'appui de ma thèse.

Je me bornerai à rappeler à votre Excellence qu'en tout état de cause le régime provisoire établi au mois de Décembre, d'accord avec la Légation Britannique, doit tout au moins être observé par les offices postaux Anglais, et je me persuade que votre Excellence voudra bien donner des instructions dans ce sens au Consul Britannique de Mohammérah, afin d'éviter des difficultés, qui ne peuvent manquer de surgir si ce fonctionnaire persiste dans son opposition.

J'ajoute, à titre de renseignement, que le Consul aurait laissé entendre que les autorités Consulaires Anglaises des ports du sud seraient autorisées à se servir de la force armée pour empêcher la Douane Persane de soumettre la poste Anglaise aux formalités Douanières. J'ai la conviction qu'il n'en est rien et que ce propos a été à tort imputé au Consul Britannique. J'ai tenu néanmoins à le rapporter à votre Excellence, car je suis persuadé qu'elle aura, la toute première, le désir de le désavouer.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) J. NAUS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 126.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. Naus.

M. le Ministre,

Téhéran, le 13 Février, 1905.

J'AI l'honneur d'acenser réception à votre Excellence de son office, en date d'hier, relatif à la visite par la Douane des valises adressées au bureau postal de Mohammerah.

Je suis prêt à prescrire au Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique à Mohammerah l'acceptation jusqu'à nouvel ordre du régime provisoire établi en Décembre dernier à Bouchir et à lui envoyer, si votre Excellence le désire, un télégramme à cet effet.

Le Chargé d'Affaires de Sa Majesté Britannique a effectivement donné des ordres aux autorités Consulaires des ports du sud de s'opposer, au besoin par la force, à toute tentative de la part des fonctionnaires de la Douane d'astreindre les valises postales à des formalités inusitées par le passé jusqu'à ce que celles-ci eussent fait l'objet d'un accord entre nos deux Gouvernements. Ces ordres ont été approuvés par le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères à Londres et résultent de l'action que M. le Directeur-Général des Douanes du Sud a cru devoir prendre en refusant au représentant de la Résidence le sursis qu'elle demandait jusqu'à l'arrivée de la réponse du Gouvernement des Indes, et en faisant saisir par la force la malte Royale. Je ne suis, par conséquent, point à même de les désavouer, si c'est, comme je le pense, dans le sens préindiqué que M. le Consul McDouall en a averti M. le Directeur-Général des Douanes de l'Ambistan.

Quant à la question de principe, le Règlement Légal annexé à la Convention Anglo-Persane ne contient aucune disposition ayant trait au service postal dans les ports du Golfe Persique, et ne peut, par conséquent, d'après notre manière de voir, modifier à défaut d'arrangements spéciaux les attributions des bureaux postaux de Sa Majesté Britannique, qui ne découlent point d'un Traité de Commerce et restent ainsi en dehors de la portée du nouvel accord. Leur revision, si elle est désirée par le Gouvernement Persan, peut être discutée et faire l'objet d'une entente *ad hoc*, entente à laquelle je serai tout prêt, si mon Gouvernement m'y autorise, à coopérer.

Je profite, &c.

(Signé) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 126.

M. Naus to Sir A. Hardinge.

M. le Ministre,

Téhéran, le 19 Février, 1905.

J'AI l'honneur d'acenser réception à votre Excellence de son office du 13 de ce mois en réponse à ma lettre de la veille relative au régime applicable à l'entrée en Perse aux valises postales arrivant des Indes à Mohammerah, et qui y sont reçues par le bureau postal Anglo-Indien de la localité.

Dans ma dite lettre je priais votre Excellence de bien vouloir donner l'ordre au bureau postal précité de se conformer tout au moins à l'accord provisoire établi avec votre Légation ensuite des difficultés qui s'étaient produites au bureau de Bouchir.

Puisque votre Excellence a la bonté de me faire l'offre d'envoyer un télégramme dans ce sens au Consul de Mohammerah, je la prie de bien vouloir m'en communiquer le texte afin d'éviter toute discordance dans les instructions que, de mon côté, je cablerai au Directeur des Douanes de la même ville.

Pour le surplus, je ne puis croire que le Gouvernement des Indes veuille soutenir qu'il n'existe pas déjà un arrangement entre le Royaume-Uni et la Perse, concernant le mode d'importation des colis postaux et des colis d'échantillons. Il me suffira pour établir le fait de rappeler le texte de l'Article 27, huitième alinéa, du Règlement Légal, arrêté de commun accord, au mois d'Août dernier, entre l'Administration des Douanes de Perse et le Gouvernement Britannique:—

“Les sacs renfermant les dépêches et correspondances postales, à l'exclusion formelle des sacs renfermant des colis postaux ou des colis d'échantillons, sont exempts de la visite et des autres formalités Douanières.”

D'autre part, ainsi que je l'ai déjà rappelé, l'Article 51 du même Règlement stipule que les marchandises déchargées doivent dès leur sortie du navire ou de l'embarcation être conduites directement dans les magasins ou enclôs de la Douane.

De ces textes il résulte avec une incontestable certitude que, pour être exempts de la visite et des autres formalités Douanières, les sacs renfermant des dépêches et correspondances postales ne peuvent contenir ni colis postaux ni colis d'échantillons; il en résulte de même que les colis postaux et les colis d'échantillons doivent dès leur sortie du navire ou de l'embarcation être conduits directement dans les magasins ou enclôs de la Douane.

Je me persuade qu'il ne se produira aucune contestation à cet égard, et dans cet ordre d'idées je me permettrai de rappeler simplement les conclusions de l'entretien que j'ai eu avec votre Excellence, à savoir, que pour mettre fin aux conflits continuels qui se produisent entre les bureaux de poste Anglo-Indiens et la Douane Persane, il est nécessaire—

1. D'obtenir de l'Administration des Postes de Calcutta qu'elle ordonne à ses agents d'éliminer de ses sacs postaux ordinaires en destination de la Perse tous colis postaux ou colis d'échantillons, et de former au moyen de ces colis des sacs spéciaux qui seront toujours remis directement à la Douane Persane;

2. De négocier une Convention spéciale pour les relations postales entre l'Inde et la Perse, afin de régler définitivement toutes les questions pendantes et d'assurer la régularité du service, ce qui est impossible dans l'état d'incertitude qui existe actuellement quant aux droits et obligations respectifs des offices Indien et Persan.

Je vous saurai gré, M. le Ministre, de bien vouloir me tenir au courant de la suite que votre Excellence donnera aux propositions qui précèdent, et je la prie, &c.

(Signé) J. NAUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 126.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. Naus.

M. le Ministre,

Téhéran, le 20 Février, 1905.

CONFORMÉMENT au désir que votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'exprimer dans son office en date d'hier, je m'empresse de lui communiquer le texte de la dépêche que j'ai adressée à notre Consul à Mohammerah, par l'entremise du Résident Britannique au Golfe Persique, relativement à l'entrée en Perse des valises postales venant des Indes.

En ce qui concerne la question générale traitée dans l'office précité, je me borne à rappeler à votre Excellence qu'aucune mention n'a été faite dans le Règlement Légal annexé à la Convention Anglo-Persane du 9 Février, 1903, des attributions privilégiées dont jouissent les bureaux postaux Anglais dans le Golfe Persique; que ces attributions ne découlent point de Conventions Commerciales antérieures, et ne peuvent être, à notre avis, limitées par les modifications apportées au régime Douanier à défaut d'un accord explicite à cet effet. Mais je suis tout prêt à référer au Gouvernement des Indes les deux propositions résumant les vues exprimées par votre Excellence dans le cours de nos discussions verbales, à savoir, l'élimination des valises postales ordinaires des colis postaux et échantillons postaux, et leur remise dans des sacs spéciaux à la Douane, ainsi que la négociation d'une Convention spéciale pour les relations postales entre l'Inde et la Perse. Je suis même disposé, si votre Excellence le désire, afin d'amener le plus tôt possible l'entente voulue, à télégraphier ces propositions à Calcutta.

Je profite, &c.

(Signé) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 126.

Sir A. Hardinge to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P.

MAIL bags at Mohammerah.

Instruct His Majesty's Consul to comply with the provisions of the temporary arrangement made with the Persian Government by Mr. Grant Duff as to opening in presence of a representative of postal bags containing parcels.

Tehran, February 17, 1905.

Inclosure 6 in No. 126.

M. Naus to Sir A. Hardinge.

M. le Ministre,

Téhéran, le 23 Février, 1905.

PAR son office en date du 20 Février votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire l'offre de télégraphier à Calcutta les propositions émises dans le cours de nos discussions verbales relativement au mode d'importation des colis postaux et des colis d'échantillons contenus dans les valises postales venant des Indes, ainsi que la nécessité de négocier une Convention Postale spéciale pour les échanges postaux entre les Indes et la Perse.

Je m'empresse d'exprimer à votre Excellence ma reconnaissance pour cet offre, dont la réalisation ne tardera pas, j'en suis convaincu, à amener une entente de nature à écarter le retour des conflits qui se sont produits antérieurement entre les Douanes Persanes et les bureaux postaux Anglais du Golfe Persique.

Je remercie également votre Excellence pour la communication du texte du télégramme qu'elle a bien voulu adresser au Consul Britannique à Mohammerah. Je rais, de mon côté, télégraphier dans le même sens aux fonctionnaires de la Douane.

Qu'il me soit permis, enfin, d'exprimer l'opinion que, dans l'appréciation que fait votre Excellence des droits que peuvent posséder les bureaux des postes établis dans le Golfe Persique, elle opère une confusion marquée entre le service du poste et le régime applicable à l'importation en Perse de colis de marchandise. Jamais le Gouvernement Persan n'a permis aux bureaux des postes Anglais d'importer des colis de marchandise sans observer les formalités Douanières ni acquitter les droits revenant au Trésor. Si ces bureaux avaient commis des abus d'ordre douanier, ce que je ne veux d'ailleurs pas affirmer, ils seraient gravement répréhensibles, et bien loin de pouvoir prétendre de ce chef à un droit acquis, ils se trouveraient plutôt exposés à des actions en revendication pour tout ce qui ne serait pas couvert par la prescription.

Mais en réalité le point de vue est nouveau, puisqu'il résulte en fait du traité nouveau créé par la récente admission de la Perse parmi les Etats participant à l'Union Postale pour le service des colis postaux, et pour ma part je suis fermement convaincu que le Gouvernement Britannique, après avoir examiné la question, ne vaudra pas méconnaître que l'importation en Perse des colis postaux et des colis d'échantillons, qui est formellement prévu par le Règlement Légal annexé à la Convention Anglo-Persane du 9 Février, 1903, doit être soumise aux prescriptions de ce Règlement.

Je profite, &c.
(Signé) J. NAUS.

Inclosure 7 in No. 126.

Sir A. Hardinge to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

MAILS for British post-offices in the Persian Gulf.

Persian Government request that—

1. Bags containing letters should be separated from those containing parcels; the latter would, in the case of parcels sent through Persian post-offices, in accordance with Article 27 of the "Règlement Douanier," be examined by the Customs;

2. A special Agreement should be concluded with them for the regulation of the exchange of postal correspondence between Persia and India.

Tehran, February 24, 1905.

Persian Government point out that they now have a parcels-post service of their own, and that there never could have been any intention that parcels containing dutiable articles should enter the country without payment of duty through our post-offices.

If you agree to the proposals on principle, I will ask them to draft the outlines of the Agreement they would desire, and would send it to you by next messenger.

No. 127.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 24, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, in continuation of my despatch No. 12 of the 18th ultimo, a translation of the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's reply to my demand for the indemnification of Colonel Douglas and Mr. Vice-Consul Lorimer, and a copy of a further note which I have addressed to his Excellency on the subject.

At an interview which I had with him on the 22nd instant, the Mushir-ed-Dowleh laid great stress on Colonel Douglas' written admission that he had been warned by the local Representative of the Persian Government not to trust himself with the Direkwards into the disturbed district to the south of Khoremahud, and tried to argue that if, notwithstanding, he was still bent on continuing his journey, he should have applied to Tehran for an armed escort. I pointed out that the Lurs had held up and looted an entire Persian regiment of 800 men, and that an armed escort of twenty sowars or so would have been of little use. His Excellency said that in this case we should have been justified in holding the Central Government responsible, but, as it was, none of its officials were aware that Colonel Douglas intended travelling through Luristan except the Beglar Begi of Khoremahud, who had at once warned him that the road was unsafe and his escort undependable. I replied that we were well aware of this state of things, and had remonstrated against it for the last three or four years.

The insecurity which had obliged Colonel Douglas to rely for protection, not on the Persian Government, but on the local tribesmen, was not a sudden or temporary accident, but the normal condition of a great province, in which we had been given by the Shah an important commercial concession, and for the tranquillity and safety of which we must hold the Persian Government responsible. His Excellency admitted that we had repeatedly represented to him the necessity for pacifying Arabistan and Luristan, and that we were justified in complaining that no attention had been paid to our representations.

Adverting to the measures now being adopted by the Persian Fernah, I said that, whilst I could not insist on his taking the field without provisions, or assume the responsibility of advising the Persian Government as to the plan of campaign, I must urge that there should be no deliberate procrastination, and that the tactics of the ex-Governor of Urmia, Haji Nizam-ed-Dowleh, as regards the chastisement of the Dasht Kurds, should not be repeated in Luristan. His Excellency would remember that the Nizam-ed-Dowleh would not operate in winter because the snow impeded the movements of his troops, and then, when the spring came, wanted to wait till next winter when the snow would impede those of the enemy. I hoped that the Persian Fernah, who now wished to wait till the next crop in order to obtain supplies, would not, as soon as it was reaped, plead for further delay on the ground that the moment was inopportune for reducing the insurgents by starvation. I must also press for the dispatch of a sufficiency, not merely of troops, but of arms and ammunition to His Highness, as the accounts which reached me from Lieutenant Williams indicated that these are quite inadequate.

His Excellency assured me that the Persian Government was giving its earnest attention to the matter, and had sent a large force under the Salar-i-Monzzem, ex-Governor of the Gulf Ports, but I have very little confidence in his promises or assurances. The best chance of punishing the guilty tribe is that the Persian Fernah, if hard pressed, may succeed by intrigues and so-called diplomacy in setting other tribes, or sections of tribes, against it, and by some piece of treachery, like that practised by the Valiabad on the Dasht Kurds, entice the principal offenders into his hands. A subjugation of the district by ordinary military methods seems to me,

from what I know of the Ferman Ferman and the resources at his disposal, to be very unlikely indeed.

The correspondence, of which I have the honour to inclose copies herewith, will give your Lordship a fair idea of the general situation at His Highness' head-quarters. It is unfortunate that he has quarrelled with the Fath-es-Sultān, whose assistance might have been most useful.

I inclose, with reference to the Salar-ed-Dowleh's suggestion of an alternative route, a rough map which His Royal Highness has sent me illustrating this proposal.* I had some conversation on the subject with the Nasir-ul-Mulk, who was at one time Vazir of Laristan, and who described the country traversed by this route as physically rough, but peaceable and safe. It is at present only a path, which foot-passengers or travellers riding unloaded animals can use, the latter, I gather, with difficulty, but the Nasir-ul-Mulk was of opinion that it could easily be converted into a caravan track.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 127.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Translation)
M. le Ministre,

Tehran, February 16, 1905.

I HAVE received your Excellency's note of the 11th ultimo, respecting the attack on the British Consul and the Military Attaché to His Britannic Majesty's Legation by the Dirakwand Lutes. From the statements made therein I understand that your Excellency has forgotten the contents of my note of the 23rd November last, transmitting to you a copy of Consul Lorimer's letter, addressed to Abhar Bahim Khan, the Beglar Begi.

I therefore have the honour to refer your Excellency to the above-mentioned note, and the letter written by Mr. Lorimer after the incident, and to remind you that in that letter it is distinctly stated that, when he was starting, the local authorities prevented him, and clearly informed him of the insecurity of the roads and the possible dangers.

The officers in question had undertaken that untimely journey for their own reasons and the incident happened, and afterwards they stated in writing that they were previously informed of the insecurity of the roads, and they were urged not to go; but they themselves wished to go, and that no responsibility rests with the local authorities on that account.

I have no doubt that after a little consideration of the present and my previous notes, your Excellency will agree with me that in no way the Persian authorities can be regarded as responsible in this matter.

Notwithstanding the above fact the Persian Government has, as your Excellency is aware, taken efficient steps and sent special officials to arrest and punish the offenders, and they have already begun operations.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) The Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Inclosure 2 in No. 127.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh.

Your Excellency,

Tehran, February 20, 1905.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your note of the 16th instant respecting the attack in Laristan on Colonel Douglas and Vice-Consul Lorimer.

The correspondence to which your Excellency alludes in it took place during my absence from Tehran, but I have referred to it, and I have also made inquiries from Colonel Douglas, who has drawn up for me the inclosed Memorandum on the subject.

* Not printed.

Before offering any further observations I should wish to draw your Excellency's attention to a slight but important discrepancy between the letter written by Colonel Douglas for the protection of the Beglar Begi of Khorembad, and the conclusions drawn from that letter in your Excellency's note under reply.

Your Excellency states, on the strength of Colonel Douglas' letter, that no blame attaches to the officials of the Government ("Karguzaran doulat"). A reference to the Colonel's letter, however, shows that the words employed by him were "Karguzaran-i-Ayalat," officials of the district, or local officials. Everyone knows that it was not the fault of the Beglar Begi of Khorembad, or of the other petty officials of the district that the road from Khorembad to Disful has been for the last four years interrupted, and that the whole country traversed by it is in a state of insurrection. The responsibility for a state of things which obliges travellers to apply for a safe conduct, not to the provincial authorities, who are powerless to afford them safety, but to the local tribes, rests with the Central Government at Tehran, which has been repeatedly urged by His Majesty's Legation ever since the transfer three years ago of the Bank's Road Concession to the Transport Company to take such steps for the pacification of Laristan as would make it possible for the Company to realize its Concession, but has not thought fit to comply with our requests. In fact it allowed the Dirakwands to capture two years ago 800 men of the Perahun Regiment, stripping them of everything, taking 100 rifles, and killing 150. Last year they attacked with 150 the Nohavand Regiment, dispersed it, killing 24 soldiers, and looted all its belongings, whilst a few months ago 1,000 families of the Mamiwands came up to Nohavand and Malayir, looting and plundering all the country they traversed. Yet no measures were taken to punish them.

It is, therefore, not to the Beglar Begi or to any other helpless minor authority, but to your Excellency yourself, that I have been directed by my Government to apply for compensation to the injured officers. I cannot doubt that the justness and moderation of this demand will be recognized by the exalted Government.

With regard to the steps which the Persian Government is now taking, I entertain no doubt that His Highness the Ferman Ferman will, if properly supported from Tehran, successfully execute the orders given him; but I cannot conceal from your Excellency that the reports which His Majesty's Acting Consul at Kermanshah, who is with the Prince, sends me, are not as encouraging as I could wish. He does not appear to have sufficient provisions at Khorembad for his troops, and the number of men at present at his disposal does not appear to Dr. Williams to be adequate to the needs of the expedition.

I would therefore ask your Excellency to be kind enough to inform me what is the actual strength of the force which the Government is sending. I mean, how many soldiers and guns are with it, or on the way there, and whether they are considered by it sufficient for the object in view.

I would also urge very strongly that the authors of the outrage should be caught and brought to Tehran, that the troops should be kept and, if necessary, strengthened at Khorembad, and the Ferman Ferman and his army not recalled, but should be ordered to continue the operations until this object has been achieved.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 127.

Paraphrases of Telegrams to and from Lieutenant Williams, with the Ferman Ferman's Expedition to Laristan.

(1.)

Lieutenant Williams to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 7.)

Bacajird, February 7, 1905.

THIS expedition consists of rather less than 1,500 Persian soldiers, with, on an average, eight cartridges per man, two small guns, with a very small supply of ammunition. We have practically no food supplies.

Previous expeditions of over 15,000 men have gone against the Direkwands and have only succeeded in burning a few tents, &c.; the Persian Government is simply trifling with His Majesty's Government by pretending that these preparations are sufficient to fulfil our demands satisfactorily. The preparations should have been completed by now, as the best time for attacking is in six weeks' time from now.

(2.)

Lieutenant Williams to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 8.)

Burujird, February 14, 1905.

In Khoremabad, some six days' ago, they captured by treachery Mir Ali Khan Sagwand and Beglar Begi, at present allies of the Fath-es-Sultan, and later on there was a fight in which the latter lost fourteen men killed. This increases the Persian Government's difficulties, as they were relying for help from him.

The Ferman Fermah was yesterday at the telegraph office communicating with Tehran, and I learned the result, which is as follows:—

The Grand Vizier insisted that there were already 10,000 men with all necessaries here, and refused to believe the Governor-General's details. The gist of his reply was that the Governor-General was afraid, and he ended by ordering him to start immediately. The Governor-General considers this bad, and that he must now go out and take his chances. He informed me privately that he could guarantee me neither food nor protection. I have to-day written to him officially asking whether he can guarantee me food, and saying that I am ready to pay for it. As there is no food, and he therefore cannot do this, he says he will ask the Government what answer to give me. He advised me to take supplies for men and animals for two months; this would require more than forty extra mules, even if I could procure them. What is your view?

He hinted to me that unless His Majesty's Government present an ultimatum to the Persian Government, latter will not furnish money necessary to effect capture of the authors of the outrage. He also says that Mir Ali Khan was the instigator of the attack, and that they have found a stolen gelding in his stables. Also that he has sent a portmanteau to the Fath-es-Sultan.

(3.)

Sir A. Hardinge to Lieutenant Williams.

(No. 7.)

Tehran, February 16, 1905.

Yesterday the Mushir-ed-Dowleh showed me a telegram from the Ferman Fermah stating that owing to certain local conditions, I presume the capture of Mir Ali Khan Sagwand, he would prefer to postpone for three months the punishment of the Direkwands, when they reap the first crop, and operations would be easier. I answered that the Persian Government must be the best judge of such considerations; the responsibility for punishing the offenders was theirs, and His Majesty's Government could not share in it by advising as to the plan of campaign. But I must insist that no more procrastination shall be permitted and that Ferman Fermah be told that within three months, or sooner, operations must be successfully carried out.

I understand that His Majesty's Government does not wish you to proceed beyond the base. Would there be difficulty about obtaining ordinary provisions at Khoremabad?

(4.)

Lieutenant Williams to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 9.)

Burujird, February 18, 1905.

Ferman Fermah's plea for three months is simply an attempt to shelve the matter for the present. He told me that the Grand Vizier had received the proposal sympathetically. He gives the necessity for punishing the Fath-es-Sultan as one reason for delaying, but if he cannot go against the Direkwand it is hopeless for him

to think of attacking the Fath-es-Sultan. Moreover, I should think he ought to attack the former before they have any chance of cutting the crops.

The true "local conditions" are that there is no food and a complete insufficiency of men and ammunition. The Governor-General admits that if the Persian Government would find the money the difficulty about food would disappear. It would take three months to bring the army up to sufficient strength.

He has officially informed me that there will be considerable difficulty about provisions at Khoremabad. He is anxious for me to stop at Khoremabad and gives this as his reason. Please impress on the Persian Government that they are responsible for my getting supplies. It would be foolish to go beyond the base with the present force, but when it is increased, unless I go forward, the Governor-General can report that the authors of the outrage are killed in action, and we shall be unable to check his statements. Please give me definite orders on the subject.

(5.)

Sir A. Hardinge to Lieutenant Williams.

(No. 9.)

Tehran, February 21, 1905.

Immediate attack on Direkwands is clearly impossible, and if the collection of the necessary provisions and troops will take three months we must, however, reluctantly acquiesce in the postponement. I am telegraphing to ask authority for you to proceed with Prince beyond the base.

(6.)

Lieutenant Williams to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 10.)

Burujird, February 21, 1905.

Governor-General's three months have now become seven. His present plan is to wait till September when the Beranawand and Sagwand move down, and then, having seized the only available pass, to hold their families and flocks as hostages while the fighting men move on to punish the Direkwand; the families, &c., would only be released when success had been attained. If he succeeds in stopping the families, &c., this would make us most unpopular among the remaining tribes, but unless His Majesty's Government is ready to force the Persian Government it is the only plan which holds out any chance of success. With his present force the Ferman Fermah can do nothing now or in the immediate future.

He has just shown me a telegram from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh stating that you have accepted the proposal to postpone the punishment of the Direkwands until after the harvest. The Governor-General says this means another six months.

(7.)

Sir A. Hardinge to Lieutenant Williams.

Tehran, February 25, 1905.

Inform Prince that he is under a misunderstanding as to what I said to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and quote to him my telegram to you, No. 9, of the 21st instant. I told the Mushir we would wait three months and no longer, and that we could not possibly allow the procrastinating tactics adopted in the Urumia murder case, which resulted in the Persian Government having to pay that of the United States' an indemnity of 37,000 tomans. I have asked officially for details of the guns and troops supplied to the Prince, and hope for an answer shortly. I should strongly deprecate any action on the Prince's part which could lead the Russ to believe that he had abandoned or indefinitely postponed operations.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 40. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, February 28, 1905.

A DETERMINED attempt is being made here to organize an agitation against M. Naus and the Belgian Customs Administration. Its mainspring is the Nizam-es-Sultaneh, whom I reported last September to have offered a large sum for the Ministry of Customs, and it is said to be secretly encouraged by the Sand-ed-Dowleh, Minister of Commerce, and by several other members of the Government, as well as directly or indirectly by the heads of the Clerical party. A somewhat comic feature in the movement is the selection by its authors, as one of their chief weapons against M. Naus, of a photograph taken of him after a fancy-dress ball, to which he went, rather unwisely, in the robe and turban of a mollah. Hundreds of copies of this photograph, of which I inclose one,* have been sent to the clergy throughout Persia, as well as to Kerbela and Nejed, and the report has been spread that M. Naus, to display his contempt for the Shiah faith, masqueraded at this dance as the twelfth Imam, the mysterious successor of Ali, who is supposed to be still living in an unknown retreat in Mesopotamia, and whom orthodox Persians revere as their true temporal and spiritual Sovereign. The absurdity of this charge is self-evident, as a person representing the twelfth Imam would have worn a black or green and not a white turban, but the story has been eagerly circulated by M. Naus' numerous enemies, and a leading Mollah here, an opponent of the present Government, lately stated to a member of my staff that if it were really true it would be the duty of all good Moslems to kill M. Naus as a blasphemer. Leaflets calling upon them to do so have, in fact, actually been distributed in Tehran, together with a large number of little cards, of which a sample is inclosed herewith. M. Naus, who informs me that attempts have been made to blackmail him in connection with these threats, has been a good deal annoyed by them, and has written to the Shah and Grand Vizier, offering, if his retention of his office should be a cause of embarrassment to the Persian Government, to resign and leave the country. His Majesty has, however, sent him a very gracious reply, in which he praises his services, and urges him to pay no attention to foolish talk.

An impression appears to exist in certain quarters that the agitation may assume somewhat serious proportions, and may become as dangerous to the Belgian Administration, whose intense unpopularity, especially since the introduction of the new tariff, is well known to your Lordship, as was the movement which overthrew it to the Régie. The news of the recent disorders at Baku is said to have created some excitement here among the more fanatical elements. An Armenian informant in the service of the Persian Government, who is at the same time in close touch with the Armenian revolutionary party, asserts, with what truth I do not know, that the Armenians and Russian Socialists, having combined to organize a revolutionary strike at Baku, the Russian authorities stirred up the rough Mussulman elements swarming in that city against the revolutionists, and that religious riots followed, in which many Armenians were massacred and their shops looted by Tartars and Persians. The report of these events, added to the effect of the Russian disasters, and the belief that no danger now exists of any armed intervention in Persia, either by Russia, which is too much occupied by her own troubles, or by England, which is too remote, should outrages on Christians be committed here, has, I am assured, helped to rekindle fanaticism. It seems, therefore, just possible that an attack on Armenians, an anti-Belgian demonstration such as that which took place at Tabreez in August 1903, or perhaps even an attempt on M. Naus' life, may take place during Moharrem, which begins in a week's time. M. Naus himself informs me that he anticipates a fresh crusade against the Babis, similar to that which caused bloodshed at Ispahan and Yezd in the summer of 1903, and the accompanying extract from a despatch addressed to me by Mr. Preece tends to show that the attitude of the clergy is again a source of some anxiety to the Government. I gather from M. Naus that the real object, in his opinion, of the agitation is the expulsion of all Christians from the Customs Administration, together with the abolition of the new tariff, and that the movement at Tabreez, which I reported in my despatch No. 6, Commercial, of the 1st instant, is intimately connected with it. It meets with sympathy among the subordinate Mahomedan officials of the Customs and Postal

* Not reproduced.

Administrations, these being jealous both of the Belgians filling the higher posts, and of the Armenian clerks, whom the latter employ in large numbers, and who are regarded by their Persian colleagues, for much the same reasons, with the dislike felt for the Syrians in the Egyptian Government Departments. It is also fanned by the partisans of the Atabeg, by the numerous enemies of the Ain-ed-Dowleh's system of suppressing all plunder except his own, and by the latent elements of disaffection, which aim at striking, through the Government, at the dynasty, or at least at the person of the present unpopular Shah.

Without venturing on any positive prophesy, which is always dangerous when dealing with Oriental movements, I think personally that it is not very likely that the agitation described above will result in any overt acts of violence in Tehran itself. The populace of the capital is both cowardly and fairly free from fanaticism, and some of the ablest Chiefs of the clerical party, though decidedly hostile to the Belgians, are not unfriendly to the Ain-ed-Dowleh. The clergy are in fact disunited, and there is no one unquestioned leader either here or in Mesopotamia who could, as in the time of the Régie, take command of and direct a religious rising.

The present Imam Jumei, a Nejed doctor of great learning, who has impressed me as favourably as any Persian ecclesiastic that I have met, has declared to Abbas Kuli Khan his disapproval of the methods of the agitators, and I rather doubt the truth of the rumours which have reached me that both he and Sheikh Fazlullah are affording them secret support.

Seyyed Abu Talib Zenjani, another enlightened Mujtehed, who is in the Grand Vizier's confidence, and who came to see me yesterday, also spoke of these methods with contempt, but he, at the same time, strongly denounced M. Naus and the Belgians in general, and said that he was pressing the Persian Government to replace them by Persians, not on religious grounds, but because he believed they robbed the State, and because the economies effected by the suppression of their high salaries would enable the Ain-ed-Dowleh to reorganize the army and Administration. But while for the above reasons I am inclined to regard as more improbable than not, at least in the immediate future, any popular outbreak against the Belgians, I believe that the feeling against them is steadily growing in strength among all classes, and that M. Naus may ere long find it difficult to maintain his present position. I think it at least advisable to report it to your Lordship in case it should take an acute form.

News has just been brought to me that the agitators have stirred up at Kermanshah a movement against the importation of Russian sugar, on the ground that impure matter is used in its production; that several shops in which such sugar is sold have been attacked, and that a deputation is to be sent to the Shah to demand that its sale should be prohibited for the future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 128.

Translation of Card respecting Moslems and M. Naus.

O Moslems!

ISLAM is dead and infidelity is up. The Sovereign is Naus, the Vizier is Lavers, and the Statesmen Christians. It is the end.

Inclosure 2 in No. 128.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Extract.)

Ispahan, February 15, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report that His Royal Highness the Zil-es-Sultan sent for me the other day and asked me to report to you the following three episodes, which he thinks of moment, and which show the temperament of the Mollahs in this place, and all tend to weaken his authority and cause him some considerable anxiety, as he fears that sooner or later complications of a disagreeable nature may arise, which may cause him to lose his Governorship. He informed me confidentially that he had received a communication from the Shah as to the state of affairs now prevailing in Russia, and that he feared that the disturbances might spread to Persia; that he was to do the utmost to keep the ulema contented and quiet so as to obviate any chances of their

making any disturbances in Ispahan. Under such circumstances what was he to do but to give in to them in every way, and the only result would be that the more he gave in, the more they would ask.

A certain Mirza Abul Nassim, who had started the last Babi persecutions by killing two Babi merchants here in the summer of 1903, had returned to Ispahan. He is not a man of much importance, but a great intriguer and very cruel. Not only has he been allowed to return here with impunity, but, without consulting him, the Zil-es-Sultan is informed that the Shah has given him a present in the shape of a jewelled stick and a diamond ring together with a Firman. It seems impossible that the Grand Vizier can have been aware of this man's history when he allowed such a thing, and he would do well to recall it, otherwise it amounts to a premium for the massacre of Babis.

A certain Mirza Nasrullah, said to be a Babi, having returned to Ispahan, Aga Nejeff and his brother, Sheikh Nurullah, have written to the Zil-es-Sultan in more or less peremptory terms, somewhat veiled, demanding his expulsion from the town. The Zil-es-Sultan who, in view of the Shah's wishes to give the Mollahs no cause for complaint, saw no means of getting out of the demand, ordered the man to leave the town at once. He has not yet left on account of illness.

No. 129.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 41.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 1, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received respecting affairs at Urumia from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, together with a copy of my reply.

The "blazing indiscretion" on the part of the American Minister to which the Rev. O. Parry refers, is an *en clair* telegram in which Mr. Pearson communicated to Dr. Norton, the United States' Special Commissioner at Urumia, an instruction from Washington to the effect that "Labaree matter was settled, and that he might leave as soon as he found convenient."

The Russian Consulate, as your Lordship is aware, has worked throughout to prevent the punishment of the murderers, in the hope of thus indirectly injuring British prestige in Azarbaijan, and the contents of the telegram were at once published by the Russian telegraphist at Urm, with the result that the impression was created that the further demands of the British and American Representatives on the subject would not be prosecuted. The missionaries, both English and American, were furious, and the latter held a meeting in which they protested against the action of their own Government.

I need not trouble your Lordship with Dr. Norton's despatch on the subject which enters at great length into a mass of local detail, but I have thought it advisable to explain the line taken by Mr. Parry the head of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission, as the latter has written on the subject to His Grace, who may address your Lordship respecting it. The missionaries of both nationalities, not perhaps unreasonably, considering their lonely and anxious position in a wild border region of Azarbaijan, and the constant rumours of an impending jihad by the Kurds, appear to be in rather a nervous and excited condition, which inclines them to protest with great vehemence against the slightest semblance of acquiescence in any but the fullest satisfaction of the demands made by us on their behalf.

The inclosed copies of telegrams up to date from Mr. Wratislaw will give your Lordship a fair idea of the present situation at Urumia. As Moharrem begins next week, I thought it my duty to speak very seriously to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh to-day about the continued delay in the removal of the Mollah Mirza Hussein Aga, and to state that if the Persian Ministers could not see their way to compel the Valiahad to obey their orders, I should have to apply for an audience of the Shah, and ask His Majesty to fulfil the promise given me.

His Excellency informed me that the Kurdish Chiefs suspected of complicity in the murders committed by Seyed Ghaffar arrived here a few days ago, and though not actually in gaol, were under observation as State prisoners or hostages pending the inquiry to be held into their guilt.

Two other suspected accomplices were across the border in Turkey, whilst another, an old man of 90, had been allowed for the present to remain in Azarbaijan.

He promised to lay my views without delay before the Shah, and also to submit a claim made by me for the payment of compensation to the relatives of Mushi Daniel, the naturalized Canadian, whose murder by Seyed Ghaffar was the original cause of all the trouble.

I pointed out to him that, though Daniel might be a Persian subject in Persia itself, his British naturalization and the connection of the murder with the interests and security of the Archbishop's Mission entitled me to intervene at least officiously on his behalf and to support the demands for justice made by his family.

I have just received a visit from Dr. Wishart of the American Presbyterian Mission in this city. He called to present to me on behalf of the American missionaries their thanks for the assistance and support which their brethren at Urumia had received from His Majesty's Legation and His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez in connection with the recent troubles and he handed me the inclosed copy of a letter of thanks addressed by them to Captain Gough whose services they had greatly appreciated.

Dr. Wishart referred to the *en clair* telegram dispatched by Mr. Pearson to Dr. Norton, which he observed, speaking to me confidentially, was, in his opinion, injudicious.

I explained to him that its meaning had been misunderstood both by the American and British missionaries, and that he could rest satisfied that both Governments would press their outstanding demands until full satisfaction had been given to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 129.

Mr. Stevens to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Tabreez, February 9, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to inclose for your Excellency's information extract of a letter received from Rev. O. H. Parry touching on the situation in Urumia, also copy of a despatch sent by Dr. Norton to his Minister in Tehran on the same subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. STEVENS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 129.

Rev. O. H. Parry to Mr. Stevens.

(Extract.)

Urm, January 31, 1905.

YOUR letter of the 26th January makes me feel very seriously about the situation here created by the American Minister's "blazing indiscretion." Does it really mean that the Government is going to reduce pressure, or perhaps clear out? It seems almost incredible, unless our Government is ready to suffer such a blow at its prestige in this province that it is not likely to recover from. You will remember that I, personally, never pressed that the case of Rabbi Mushi's murder should be taken up, nor did I ask for Mr. Wratislaw to come here, nor did I suggest that, after the Seyyid was caught, our Government should continue to demand punishment of the Kurds. I, therefore, feel that I have, personally, very strong grounds for pointing out that the situation here has been created quite voluntarily by His Britannic Majesty's officials in this country, and that having made definite demands—the notorious three—of a most stringent character it would be absolutely disastrous to relinquish them, because the American Minister had made a *fiat pns* and flouted, as it appears, our Government. The result of withdrawal now would be that the Kurds will be uncontrollable, that no foreigner will be safe here, and that in consequence the Archbishop of Canterbury will be asked whether it is worth while any Englishman remaining here. We recognize the kindness, generosity, and

unselfishness of our Government to the full in prosecuting the case against the Kurds and risking a breach with the Persian authorities; but I would also insist that its action has created a situation for us who reside here which our Government can scarcely regard as safe or desirable. The proofs of this situation not being imaginary have been amply supplied by Captain Gough and Dr. Norton, and I need not repeat them here. It is no longer a purely American affair; our Government voluntarily entered the field, and among the resulting circumstances was a wanton and insulting attack by these Kurds on our Consul. It seems, therefore, that our Government is no longer hampered in making its demands by the fact that the Americans are the parties concerned. I have no hesitation in saying that if our action now ceases, British influence will be dead, no American or, at least, no Englishman will be safe here, and a massacre of Christians is one of the events which we shall look forward to with a helpless sense of certainty.

I am writing in the above sense to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and, while I have hitherto refrained from intruding my personal opinions in the case, I feel you will pardon me for writing so strongly now, when there seems a chance of an irrevocable step of a disastrous kind being taken.

Inclosure 3 in No. 129.

Telegrams between Consul-General Wratislaw and Sir A. Hardinge

(1.)

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tabreez, February 20, 1905.

THE Valiahd received me to-day with the United States' Consul and Gough. He promised me that Mollah should leave Urmī before the end of present Mahomedan month. He undertook also to punish Gough's assailants, and stated that he was sending a small force of cavalry immediately and would dispatch a larger expedition against the Kurds, when the snow melted, if they did not voluntarily give up the culprits. I said that, up till now, we had been given to understand that winter was the best time for such operations; but he answered that all seasons were alike for him and his soldiers.

The Valiahd is, in my opinion, better disposed than when I last saw him; but one must still discount his assurances.

I will explain situation with regard to Daniel indemnity to English missionary and ask him to make it known.

(2.)

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tabreez, February 21, 1905.

Please communicate following from United States' Consul to United States' Minister:—

"Great improvement in situation. Satisfactory assurances given by Prince in presence of two British colleagues that no time will be lost in arresting remaining accomplices. Mollah will be exiled next week. Immediate safety of Americans apparently assured. I am going to Kharput. Continued pressure at Tehran for the fulfilment of promises made here very necessary. English Consul-General prepared to co-operate, if so ordered by his Legation."

(3.)

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tabreez, February 28, 1905.

Hearing from the Karguzar that Valiahd hesitates to fulfil his promise to remove Mollah before Moharrem, I have sent message to his Imperial Highness that His Majesty's Government implicitly rely on promise to remove Mollah before Moharrem. In the case of an unsatisfactory answer, I will obtain an immediate audience and request you to have necessary orders sent from Tehran again. Further delay of at least a month inevitable, unless Mollah leaves before Moharrem.

Missionaries at Urmī still nervous and afraid to go out of the town.

(4.)

Sir A. Hardinge to Consul-General Wratislaw.

(Telegraphic.) P.

March 1, 1905.

Kindly give following message to Valiahd from me:—

"I hear with great concern that your Imperial Highness hesitates to fulfil your promise to remove Mollah Mirza Hussein Agha. That promise you gave to me in person in September last, subject to approval from Tehran. I have been assured by the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that the Persian Government have sent you necessary authorization. His Majesty's Government have shown the more patience over this matter than that of the United States; but it has its limits and I hope that it will not be further tried."

You need not, of course, deliver this message if your interview with Valiahd should prove satisfactory.

Inclosure 4 in No. 129.

American Missionaries to Captain Gough.

Dear Sir,

Urumia, February 8, 1905.

WE have already expressed individually something of the gratitude we feel for your great kindness during the past months. In this note we would like to express our gratitude a little more formally and as a body of missionaries.

From the time of the sad occurrence that has been the occasion of our need we have been favoured by the most sympathetic and efficient protection on the part of the Representatives of His Britannic Majesty's Government in Persia, and the advantages of that fact to us cannot be overestimated. It has been the best thing possible for the Government during this time of danger, and it is more than we could have expected to have had first Consul-General Mr. Wratislaw and then yourself for so long a time here in Urumia.

Besides the presence here of a Consul all this time, the services of your Legation at Tehran in co-operation with the American Legation, as well as the services of the Consulate-General at Tabreez, have added to the long list of favours for which the American missionaries are indebted to His Britannic Majesty's Government.

We would not fail to mention either the great pleasure it has been to have you and Mr. Wratislaw as our guests, and as members of the little British-American Colony here.

You have yourself had proof of the reality of the danger which has threatened us, and we cannot refrain from expressing the hope that the British Government will exact such reparation for that insult to its Representatives here as will leave a lasting impression on the community. Nothing short of the punishment of the parties directly guilty of the attack on you as well as of those guilty of the murder of Mr. Labaree, can satisfy the demands of the case and bring to a successful result the efforts made heretofore by your Legation and ours. We cannot but express

the strong conviction of the necessity of continued pressure upon the Persian Government for such reparation, for the sake of national prestige as well as for the safety of those living in this region.

We desire to send copies of this letter to your Legation in Tehran and to the Consulate in Tabreez.

With heartfelt gratitude for all that we owe you and your associates, and with the earnest prayer that Almighty God may prosper you, &c.

(Signed by all the Resident American Missionaries.)

Inclosure 5 in No. 129.

Sir A. Hardinge to Consul-General Wratishaw.

(No. 4.)

Sir,

Tehran, February 28, 1905.

I HAVE received Mr. Stevens' despatch No. 5 of the 9th instant, inclosing a letter from the Rev. C. Parry, of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission, respecting affairs at Urumia.

The impressions under which Mr. Parry wrote this letter have perhaps been modified by subsequent events, but it is evident that he has misunderstood in common with his American brother missionaries the meaning of the telegram addressed by the United States' Minister to Dr. Norton.

What Mr. Pearson intended, I feel certain, to convey, was that the negotiations between the Government of the United States and Persia respecting the Labaree murder were concluded. The basis of the arrangement was the payment by Persia of an indemnity of 30,000 dollars, to be increased by 20,000 dollars, if, in the course of the present year, the promises given by the Persian Government to bring the remaining accomplices to justice had not been satisfactorily fulfilled. There has been no question on the part of either the British or American Governments of "reducing pressure" or "clearing out," and, as you are aware, I have continually spurred the Persian Government in the matter of the Mollah, and have obtained from them an official and definite pledge on the subject, notwithstanding the stubborn obstructiveness of the Valiahd. To that pledge it is my firm resolve to hold them.

It appears to me somewhat strange, after the chief murderer and several important Kurdish Chiefs suspected of connection with his crime have been arrested and sent to Tehran, an indemnity of 30,000 dollars extorted from the Persian Government for the murder, the Governor of Urumia dismissed, and a promise to remove the Mollah and punish the remaining accomplices obtained, not merely from the Valiahd, but from the Shah, that, because the American Government regards the main question as practically settled and has authorized its Special Commissioner to leave Urumia, the missionaries should apprehend that the Kurds will become uncontrollable, British influence be dead, and the life of every American or Englishman, and, indeed, of every Christian, in danger. It may be asked what would have happened if no action had been taken either by the United States' Legation or by ourselves, as representing American interests in Azarbaijan, after the murder of Mr. Labaree, and whether Mr. Parry would have then maintained the view expressed in his letter of the 31st January that "as a missionary he had no special claim to the protection of his Government," and would "have been willing to run any risks involved in his work and incurred on his responsibility." It is true that we took action as soon as we heard that the situation at Urumia was critical and that the security of the British and American missionaries was threatened, but it is also the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed His Majesty's Secretary of State on the subject on the strength of reports received from Mr. Parry, and that I received, in consequence of his Grace's representations, instructions on which I had already acted by anticipation. It cannot therefore be argued that the measures adopted by the two Governments in order to secure the punishment of the murderers and satisfaction to the relatives of their victims may be justifiably resented by the missions as a piece of officious meddling which has increased their difficulties, simply because, as always happens with a feeble and corrupt Administration like the Persian, all its promises are not simultaneously fulfilled. Every allowance must, of course, be made for the severe strain to which the missionaries have been exposed for so many months, nor am I blind to the dangers with which the situation is pregnant in such a district as that of Urumia, with its bitter religious and tribal feuds, its weak Government, and its lawless population; but I cannot but feel that if Mr. Parry surveys it in a calm and temperate spirit, he will

reconsider some of the expressions and insinuations which have obviously escaped him under the influence of irritation due to a misconception as to the attitude of the two Legations. You may assure him that the pressure which is unquestionably so essential, in view of the peculiar conditions of the Government of Azarbaijan, will not be relaxed here until the situation at Urumia has reassumed its normal aspect.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 130.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne. (Received March 27)

(No. 42. Secret.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 2, 1905.

THE Mushir-ed-Dowleh admitted yesterday, in the course of a conversation respecting the Russian telegraphists in Khorassan, that very strong pressure was being exercised by the Russians on the Persian Government in the matter of the military proposals mentioned in my despatch No. 32, Secret, of the 22nd ultimo. His Excellency was somewhat reserved on the subject, and tried to find out what I knew about it.

I said that I had heard that the Russians were demanding the appointment of more Russian officers in the Persian army and a share in its reorganization, and that I believed, and was confident from what I knew of the Grand Vizier's sentiments and his own, that these demands would be firmly resisted.

He replied that I was right, that the proposals which had been made by the Russian Government were inconsistent with the independence of Persia, and that the Persian Government had emphatically expressed its inability to accept them. He then asked what I thought they ought to do.

I observed that their course seemed to me very simple. They had only to state to the Russian Government that such demands as he had indicated could not be entertained; because, even if the Persian Government were itself willing to agree to them, and either to increase the number of Russian officers or to place the reorganization of the Persian army in Russian hands, there would be a danger of internal disturbances, and a probability that His Majesty's Government would demand some equivalent, such as the appointment of a corresponding number of English officers. This would make it necessary for the Persian Government frankly and fully to explain the situation to the British Legation, if only to make sure that, by agreeing the Russian proposals, it would not involve itself in difficulties with England. I thought the Russian Government would not welcome a discussion of these questions with us, and that an intimation that continued pressure might oblige that of Persia to refer the matter to me would not inevitably result in its relaxation.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh professed to agree with me, but said that he had not yet been authorized to discuss the Russian demands with me, though circumstances might very likely oblige him later on to do so.

I have ascertained that he dispatched, on the 27th ultimo, a cypher telegram of prodigious length—4,000 groups—to the Persian Minister at St. Petersburg, but as it was sent in a special secret cypher, to which he and his son and private secretary, the Motamen-ul-Mulk, alone have access, and which is kept locked up in his "underon," it has been impossible to procure a copy of it. I conjecture it to be a long string of argument against the Russian military proposals, and of appeals for the postponement of the payments due to the Russian Bank, but I cannot feel absolutely certain that it may not have contained some alternative secret offer of a scarcely less objectionable character. A sudden heavy demand on this exhausted exchequer, at a moment when the Shah wants every penny he can secure for the European tour, which absorbs all his thoughts, is a terrible weapon in Russian hands, but His Majesty knows that if he yields he will have to reckon both with England and with the clergy, whom he fears almost more than he does us.

I imagine the real reason why the Grand Vizier and the Mushir-ed-Dowleh have tried to keep me in the dark up to the present as to the real facts of these negotiations with Russia was their reluctance, or at any rate the Aini-ed-Dowleh's, to admit that they had allowed the Arfaed-Dowleh to discuss a Russian advance at St. Petersburg. The Aini-ed-Dowleh has hinted to me, through Abbas Kuli Khan, that he would like to be allowed to affect a portion of the funds which he hopes His

Majesty's Government will provide for the Abwaz dam, to the "execution of military reforms," but I have not, so far, responded to this suggestion, and have preferred to wait till he asks me, as he says he shortly will, to come and see him. This phrase, "execution of military reforms," is, I have very little doubt, a euphemism for such payment to Russia as will enable him to reform, or attempt to reform, the army without a fresh and perilous sacrifice of the national independence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 131.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne,—(Received March 27.)

(No. 43. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 2, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Ispahan respecting the alleged intention of the Zil-es-Sultan to pay a visit this summer to Europe.

His Royal Highness' statement that the Shah had asked him to accompany him is, I need hardly say, inaccurate, but I learned some time ago that he had been applying to His Majesty for permission to proceed to Europe on account of his health, and I think that he has bribed the Grand Vizier to support his application. I learn from a person who heard their conversation that His Highness spoke on the subject to the Shah in the presence of several courtiers, and pleaded in favour of the Zil-es-Sultan's request, on the ground that it was justified by the state of his health. The Shah replied that he would talk further with him respecting it in private.

I do not think it likely that the Persian Government will take the Governor-Generalship of Ispahan from the Zil-es-Sultan at Noruz. His Royal Highness is always a little anxious and nervous at this season, and I have found out the real secret of his present discontent from his son, the Jellab-ed-Dowleh, who was dining with me this evening. It appears that under the new military scheme proposed by the Grand Vizier the troops at Ispahan are to be placed under the supervision and control of the Amir Bahadur Jang, Vizier Darbar, the Chief of the new Sardars to be appointed, and that the Zil-es-Sultan regards this move as directly aimed at his prestige and authority.

No importance need under ordinary circumstances be attached to the language used by Prince Dalija, who, with Persians, is in the habit of talking in a very blustering and irresponsible fashion as to the intentions of the Russian Government, but it is just possible that when he spoke to the Zil-es-Sultan in the sense reported in Mr. Preece's despatch he had in mind the strong pressure now being exerted here by Russia in connection with the proposed military reorganization, and mentioned by me in other despatches.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 131.

Consul-General Preece to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Ispahan, February 22, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report that on Tuesday, the 21st instant, I had an interview with His Royal Highness the Zil-es-Sultan.

The Prince, since his return from Khamishlu, has been suffering a good deal in health, and I found him looking anything but well. He told me that His Majesty had asked him to accompany him to Europe, but that this invitation he had declined, but at the same time he had asked His Majesty's permission to be allowed to visit Europe so as to re-establish his health. He went on to inform me that he had made up his mind to go, and that, if he did not get the Shah's permission, he would go to Kerbelah and thence make his way to Europe.

It is evident to me that the Prince is very uneasy in his mind about something; I believe it is due largely to the departure of his sister and her son for Tehran, and that he fears her intrigues there. He gave me the inclosed copies of letters which

had passed between him and the Russian Consul-General regarding the property of his sister, which appears to have been left in the hands of the Russian Bank, and requested me to forward them on to you.

He told me that the Russian Consul-General had told him that it was Russian intention to act very strongly in Persia and Turkey; they had suffered so much in their prestige in the Far East that they must do their utmost to sustain it in these parts.

I believe the Prince fears that he may lose the government of this place, and that is what is preying on his mind, the idea of a visit to Europe is purely a political move used to try and hoodwink the Shah and Ain-ed-Dowleh, and that if at Naerooz he is confirmed in his Governorship, his health will be re-established and he will give up all idea of a trip to Europe, which would entail great expense for him, a course he would be loth to undergo. Bahram Mirza and Dr. Aganoor have gone out to-day to inspect a place of the Prince's about thirty miles away on the river, to see if it is suitable for him to spend some days there in the hope that he may be benefited.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. PREECE.

No. 132.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne,—(Received March 27.)

(No. 45.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 2, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the usual monthly summary of events in Persia.

The report mentioned by me some time ago that the Valiahd is to act as Regent during the illness of the Shah gains strength from information which has just reached me that His Imperial Highness has been summoned to Tehran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 132.

Month by Summary of Events in Persia not reported in separate Despatches.

Tehran.

THE Mudir-ul-Mulk has been dismissed from the post of Paymaster-General of the Army, which has been restored to the Kawam-ed-Dowleh, whose dismissal in the summer of 1902 was followed by his imprisonment for a conspiracy against the Grand Vizier. The post was first offered to the Amin Kheiwat, former Minister of Justice, who accepted it, but reconsidered his decision on receiving, together with the Firman appointing him, a cheque to be signed by him for a sum which is reported to have been 40,000 tomans (say, 6,500*l.*). The Kawam-ed-Dowleh was thereupon applied to, and it is stated on trustworthy authority that he got it for 30,000 tomans (say, 5,000*l.*); of this amount, 22,000 tomans were appropriated by the Shah, 5,000 tomans by the Grand Vizier, 2,000 tomans by the Minister of the Court, and 1,000 tomans by His Majesty's Private Secretary.

The Nasir-ed-Dowleh has been appointed Minister at Brussels, a post hardly vacated by the appointment of the Saad-ed-Dowleh to be Minister of Commerce. He paid 10,000 tomans (1,700*l.*) to the Shah for the appointment, of which His Majesty, in the presence of several persons, gave 100 tomans (about 15*l.*) to the Chamberlain who brought him the money.

The Nasir-ed-Dowleh is a wealthy man, who professes liberal views, and has travelled to a certain extent in Europe, but he is still rather too much of an old-fashioned Persian to feel much in his element as the permanent or agent of a diplomatic post.

The Shah is said to have developed a love of money, which contrasts in a marked manner with his former extravagance. It is alleged that he signs no papers conferring any appointment or complying with any petition except for payment in cash, and does not disdain the most insignificant sums offered. These are put away as a part of the

fund for his proposed European journey. His Majesty having been given clearly to understand by the Grand Vizier that a fresh foreign loan for the purpose would cause a dangerous sentiment among his subjects.

The question as to whether or not the tour will come off is still a constant topic of speculation. The general opinion is that the disturbed state of Russia will at the last moment induce its abandonment. It is given out in the Court that His Majesty will start early in April, and the route via Tashkent and Tashkend is still talked about. The Grand Vizier confirms this in his conversations with the foreign Representatives, and wisely avoids suggesting difficulties to the Shah before the time comes. Whilst secretly hoping that His Majesty himself may recoil from the dangers and discomforts of a journey across South Eastern Russia under the present conditions of that region, he realizes that to oppose His Majesty's plan openly would be dangerous, as he has been recently heard, whilst referring to the journey, to exclaim petulantly, alluding to the Atabeg, "The man who used to take me to Europe is no longer here."

The Motamen-i-Huzoor, a Royal Chamberlain and favourite of the Shah, who is entitled to a reward for having carried the seals of office from the late to the present Grand Vizier, has been appointed Commissioner for the d'Arcy Petroleum Concession, in succession to Mr. Vincent Kitabji, on whom the Atabeg bestowed the post after the death of General Kitabji Khan. He at first applied for the Commissionership of the Imperial Bank of Persia, but its holder, the present Minister of Public Works, advised him to try for the Oil Commissionership as being more lucrative, and the Atabeg himself, at a private audience of the Shah, asked for, and, it is believed, received an assurance that the Minister of Public Works, who is a protégé of his own, would not be deprived of the Bank Commissionership.

The Motamen-i-Huzoor has, however, in order to obtain the post, had to pay 2,000 tomans (\$300) out of his salary, which is a little less than half its total amount, to the Grand Vizier. His Highness is said to have intimated to the former holder of the post that he is open to a more advantageous offer from him.

His Majesty's Legation has intimated unofficially to the Persian Government that it would be better that the Persian Commissioner residing in London should be qualified by some knowledge of European ways and languages in which the Motamen-i-Huzoor is lacking, and the Persian Minister in London, who is now here, is extremely dissatisfied with the new appointment, as he thinks that if any change should be made in the Commissionership, it should be given to himself. It is therefore just possible that the Motamen's appointment may be rescinded.

Seyed Ali Akbar Tahirzai, an aged and influential Mujtahed, died here on the 27th ultimo. He had a considerable reputation for learning, but he was corrupt and very fond of the fair sex. Of late he has been an opponent of the present Grand Vizier, and is said to have carried his antagonism to him so far as actually to decline a present of money which his Highness sent him. He has, however, never joined the small party among the clergy who are working for the recall of the Atabeg.

The reorganization of the army formed the subject of several meetings, at which the principal Ministers, as well as the Sardars to whom commands were to be given, assisted under the Grand Vizier's Presidency. The account which have been supplied to the Legation of the discussions at these meetings indicate that a good deal of more foolish and inconclusive talk than usual was indulged in, but eventually the proposal of the Grand Vizier to place the army under twelve more or less independent commanders, here reduced to nine, was approved of, and the candidates for these commands were formally presented to and confirmed by His Majesty the Shah. The Minister of the Court, Amir Bahadur Jung, is commander of the Tehran Military Division, the Russian officers of the Russian Regent being under his command. Other commands have been given to the Amir-Dowleh, ex-Governor-General of Fars, to Amir Khan Sardar, son of the late Sepah-salar, and to other less well known personages. The present idea is that the Grand Vizier, with the Amir Bahadur Jung as adviser, will superintend the whole.

The newspaper "Miraya" has been prohibited for two violent articles, both of which denounce the British and Russian Governments alike, and one of which, under the guise of a puny attack on the Shah and Grand Vizier, contains a violent attack on the whole system of administration in Persia.

"Had it Azarbaijan," says the article, "it gave; Khurasan has been sold by dishonest sons-in-law for impure gold, and half of Baluchistan has been taken by your hypocritical friends. The very petitions of your women have been pledged to the 'Kharroff' and 'Zarantoff' (equivocal and indecent heroines to the Russian Bank).

The other article calls attention to the danger from Afghanistan as well as from

Russia, and urges Persians to wake "if they do not wish to find their daughters, sisters, and wives in the hands of Sakharoff, Infideloff, and Tyrantoff."

It is understood that the author of these articles is an official of the Persian Foreign Office.

Kerman.

His Majesty's Consul reports that Mirza Kei Khosroo, the Parsee schoolmaster at Kerman, has suddenly left that town; he stated that he was going to live in Odessa and be Russian Agent for trade purposes with South-Eastern Persia. It is possible, but not clear, that this may be the man referred to in last monthly summary as having been appointed Russian Agent at Astara.

In any case, Major Sykes thinks it a good thing he has gone, as it will now be possible to get a more satisfactory and better educated man to fill his former post. Major Sykes is communicating with the Government of India on the subject.

The Russian Consul tried to appoint Seyed Abbas, a leading merchant of Bam, to be Russian Agent in that town. The latter was hesitating as to accepting the appointment, when the arrival at Bam of the Commercial Mission and His Majesty's Consul decided him to decline.

Shiraz.

Much discontent exists, not merely in Shiraz, but also among the tribesmen of Fars, owing to the irresponsible behaviour of the Shah-es-Sultanch and his myrmidons. The people of Fasa, to the number of some 500, have taken bast in Shiraz, and refuse to leave till their grievances are redressed. They say they will be able to hold out for some months; they have telegraphed their complaints to the Shah and Grand Vizier, and they threaten to take bast in His Majesty's Consulate, and, if need be, to march to Tehran and instal themselves in His Majesty's Legation.

The Juhannis are also discontented, and are leaving Fars for neighbouring provinces.

The Jews of Shiraz are being heavily squeezed. They are the makers of wine and "arak," and formerly always had to pay 4,000 tomans to the Governor-General for being allowed to carry on this illegal trade. The Ala-ed-Dowleh, former Governor-General, refused the money and forbade the trade; the Shah-es-Sultanch accepts the money, but also forbids the trade.

Two butchers were nailed by the ears to their door-posts for selling meat at prices higher than that fixed by the local authorities, whereupon the whole butcher trade went out on strike, and for two or three days much difficulty was experienced in getting any meat at all.

Meshed.

Two hundred soldiers are being sent to Kuchan to enforce the payment of arrears of revenue, amounting to 5,500 kharwars of grain (one kharwar equals 550 lbs.) and 60,000 tomans in cash (10,000*l.*). It was said that the Governor, the Shuja-ed-Dowleh, was likely to resist the claim, alleging that he had already paid up all that was due to him.

The pay of the Russian Quarantine cordon had not been received up to the 5th February. The Russians at Karez also have received no money for some time, and are trying to run up bills at the local shops.

The Governor-General of Khorasan has received a telegram from Tehran censuring him for his inaction in the matter of the attacks on sowars of the Farhat-i-Haidari escort. His Majesty's Consul-General, acting on instructions from His Majesty's Minister, demanded that the robbers should be arrested by the 28th February, failing which a demand for 1,000 tomans would be made officially against him. On the 27th February he wrote to say that the gang was no longer in Persian territory, but His Majesty's Consul had reported on the 24th instant, on the authority of the Governor of that town, that it was still in Persia.

Another week's grace has been granted to the Governor-General.

Important Persian merchants have been inquiring about transport by the Quetta-Seistan route for goods for Meshed. The comparative cost of transport appears to be —

	Per Kharwar.
	Tonnes.
By Bander Abbas and Kerman	25 to 22
„ Bardsir, Kermanshah, and Tehran	30 „ 35
„ Quetta, Seistan	37 „ 37½

The last is avowedly the safest route, but the merchants seem to prefer to run the risk of their goods being completely lost through robbery rather than incur the extra expense.

They also complain that no trading agency exists for them such as is provided for Russian trade by the Russian Bank. They themselves have not the requisite knowledge of European languages or India business methods to transact affairs themselves. Colonel Minchin is addressing the Government of India on this subject.

Further disputes are taking place between the Russian and Persian students at the Shrine. The latter are agitating for the expulsion of the former.

Forbes, Forbes, and Campbell, the leading British firm in Meshed, are closing their agency this month. The recklessness of their agents has involved them in many complicated cases, which His Majesty's Consul-General has the utmost difficulty in settling. It is probable that the firm will fail altogether to recover many of its outstandings.

The Russian Consul-General has lately been having mysterious dealings with six men, known as "Beluchi Chiefs." All efforts have failed to identify these men with any one known, and it is surmised that they may be bogus Beluchis. The Russian Consul-General has before now been taken in in this manner.

Seistan.

Passport offices have been established along the Afghan frontier. A fee of 14 kran is levied on all persons crossing in either direction. The passport was to be available for one month only, and a fresh one to be exacted for every time a man crossed the frontier. This would entail great hardship on poorer Afghans, and M. Molitor is endeavouring to have the fee reduced to 2 kran.

M. Molitor has written to His Majesty's Consul to thank him for the assistance he has rendered in the matter of the passports of British subjects.

On cholera breaking out at Birjand, orders were telegraphed to M. Molitor to establish an observation post at Bander, and to consult the doctor of the Russian Consulate, who is said to be a specialist in epidemics. His Majesty's Minister immediately protested against the Russian doctor being allowed to interfere in such matters in Seistan, and instructed His Majesty's Consul to dispatch his hospital assistant to Bander to inquire and report on doings there. M. Naus, in his reply, justified his action on the ground of necessity, but stated that his orders to M. Molitor had been rescinded immediately after their dispatch on the receipt of more favourable news from Birjand.

On the 20th February Colonel MacMahan handed to the Persian and Afghan Boundary Commissioners the formal copies of the maps and documents relating to his Boundary Award.

Isfahan.

His Majesty's Consul-General at Isfahan has reported the death of Sirdar Mulla-khan Ikhan, of the Bakhtiaris. He has sent letters of condolence to the Samsan-es-Saltaneh and the Chuab-es-Saltaneh, next brother to the deceased.

Haji Ali Kuli Khan, the diplomatist of the Klans, has left for Tehran.

The Russian Consul-General, Prince Dabija, having complained that the Zil-es-Sultan sent none to express condolence on the assassination of the Grand Duke Serge, received the following reply:—

"You have repeatedly told me that the public news of the English telegraph office is all false and concocted by the English. How then do you expect me to act on that news, my knowledge of the event being from that source?"

His Royal Highness then sent his son, Mahmoud Mirza, and the Karguzar to call at the Russian Consulate.

March 2, 1905.

No. 133.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne — (Received March 27.)

(No. 16 Confidential.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 3, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of telegrams respecting the Governorship of Seistan which have passed between His Majesty's Consul in that district and myself, and have been repeated to the Government of India.

I have also the honour to transmit a report by Mr. Churchill of an interview with the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, which confirms the conjecture hazarded by me in my telegram No. 13 of the 12th ultimo that the Hashmat had borrowed the sum required by him from the Russian Bank. I propose to guarantee him the smaller advance from the Imperial Bank for which he is now applying.

Mohammed Ibrahim Khan, a brother of the Showkat-ul-Mulk, who is now here, is trying to get the Governorship of Kain, and has called on Colonel Douglas with an introduction from the British Agent at Birjand. It would not surprise me if the Showkat, having failed in spite of Russian support, to obtain his Governorship, were now to make overtures to us.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

P.S.—I ought to mention that the Persian Government have sent a severe despatch censuring the Karguzar of Seistan for his obstinate attitude towards His Majesty's Consul, with whom he has been instructed to cultivate more friendly relations.

A. H. H.

Inlosure 1 in No. 133.

Consul Macpherson to Sir A. Hardinge.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Seistan, February 23, 1905.

THE Local Government's discontent against the Mustansir-ul-Mulk is rapidly growing, and they have again telegraphed to Hashmat accusing him of oppression.

It is stated that the Director of Customs had a direct hand in the dispatch of these telegrams by inducing the Russian Consul to allow of their being sent in French characters through the Russian signaller, so that the Persian signaller, who is a relation of the Mustansir and on bad terms with both the Director of Customs and the Russian Consul might not learn their contents. But the information has leaked out through the Rais-i-Telegraph at Tehran, who is a brother of the Mustansir, and has informed him.

The Deputy Governor seems to be ignorant of this, and has again, at a recent interview, asked the Russian Consul to send another telegram for him from Bander through the Russian doctor and Director of Customs, who have gone there in connection with quarantine matters.

In fact, there seems to be little doubt that the Deputy Governor, thinking we have failed him, has been making overtures to the Russians. The situation as regards supporting the Hashmat, therefore, appears to be completely reversed and the

Russians, and not ourselves, would, in the event of his return to Seistan, gain credit for it.

A distinct impression prevails, on the other hand, that we are supporting the Mustansir-ul-Mulk and the Yamin-i-Nizam. As they both are showing themselves friendly to us, and enjoy the confidence of their Government, I cannot but think that the best thing that could happen for us would be that the Persian Government should appoint one of them Governor.

I would note that the Mustansir has never even exchanged cards with the Russian Consul, and the Yamin also for some time has had practically no intercourse with him.

I have come to my present conclusions as to the attitude of the Deputy Governor partly through the incidents above reported and partly through the fact of his close association with Sartip Mohammed Riza, Sardar Purdil Khan, and the Karguzar, all of whom pay visits to the Russian Consul almost daily.

Inclosure 2 in No. 133.

Sir A. Hardinge to Consul Macpherson.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, February 24, 1905.

THE situation seems to be this, that it does not much matter who becomes Governor of Seistan. If the Yamin or Mustansir get it they will be friendly to us, and if the Hashnat is appointed he will probably be constantly intrigued against by the Mustansi and the Yamin; he will be an object of suspicion to his Government, and his powers will be so curtailed that he will be of very little use either to ourselves or to the Russians. In my opinion, the less we identify ourselves with opposition to or support of one corrupt Persian official or another the better, but we have gone so far in the way of supporting the Hashnat that we can hardly drop him now without some substantial equivalent. In any case, the matter will be decided one way or another by Noruz.

I have suggested that Kain might be given to the Hashnat, and that the Shah should select for Seistan a Governor who would inspire confidence in us; but I understand that the Hashnat wants little Governorships. Grand Vizier tells me that the appointment of the Yamin is out of the question.

Inclosure 3 in No. 133.

Memorandum.

I CALLED on the Hashnat-ul-Mulk this evening, in accordance with your wishes, and explained the delay which occurred last month in acceding to his request to be assisted in borrowing a sum of 10,000 toman from the Imperial Bank in order to meet the demands of the Persian Government. He professed, however, to be very grateful for what had been done and assured me that part of the sum required had been borrowed from a daughter of the Shah, and the remainder he had transferred by telegram from Seistan. He said that he was now again being pressed for arrears of Government grain said to have been due some seven years ago, and that he would ask you to assist him in obtaining 50,000 toman from the Imperial Bank for him for a short period, until he received a remittance from Seistan. I said I thought the matter could be arranged, but added that I would like to tell him quite frankly what I had heard about the way he had got the previous sum, though I had not thought it even worth while reporting it to you and would simply mention it for his information. I had been told that he was in need of the money immediately and my answer to him had been delayed, he had applied to, and got the money from the Russian Bank. He assured me this was not the case, and that the money had been paid over to him by an Armenian who had a Russian name.

I explained that it really did not matter to me if he had got it from the Russian Bank, and I asked him out of curiosity if the Russians had made any overtures to him. He loudly denied such a thing, and called to a servant to tell me what was the name

of the merchant who paid him the money. The Seistan referred to asked another servant outside in a loud voice who the banker was, and the other replied, also quite loud enough for me to hear, "I got it from the bazaar office of the Russian Bank."

I did not press the matter any further, and talked of other things.

(Signed) G. P. CHURCHILL.

No. 134.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 49—Secret.)

Tehran, March 5, 1905.

My Lord,
I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a State paper of considerable interest written by His Excellency the Mouyyed-es-Saltanah, Minister of the Grand Vizier's Cabinet, with whom I am on friendly terms, and given me under the seal of the strictest confidence.

It is, as your Lordship will observe, a review, translated from the Persian original by Mr. Churchill, of the internal situation and foreign relations of Persia, submitted to the Ain-ed-Dowleh shortly after his accession to office. It shows that several of the internal reforms initiated or attempted by his Highness were inspired by the Mouyyed-es-Saltanah. They have indeed been carried out somewhat differently, and, as regards the Maliat and Caisse, have been intrusted to M. Naus, whom the Mouyyed regards with by no means friendly feelings.

The most interesting portion of the report is, however, that which deals with the past and future relations of Persia towards Great Britain and Russia. The views expressed in it have, I have good reason to believe, carried weight with the Grand Vizier, and have influenced the system of foreign policy pursued by him, although he has been too slow and timid to apply them with intelligence or energy.

The passage in the last paragraph but three, "Governors of Frontier Provinces," which I have marked,* is instructive in connection with the attitude of the present Government of Persia towards the Hashnat and Shauket-ul-Mulk, and the support respectively accorded by the British and Russian Legations to those two Chiefs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 134.

Memorandum addressed by Mirza Reza Khan, Mouyyed-es-Saltanah, to the Ain-ed-Dowleh, soon after his Highness succeeded to the Atabeg-i-Aram.—(Communicated March 2, and Translated by Mr. Churchill.)

SHEIKH SAIDI has said, "Two things are contrary to reason, to be silent when it is time to talk, and to talk when it is time to be silent."

Now that His Majesty the Shah has chosen your Highness to fill the exalted place of the first person in the land, and your Highness having undertaken out of love for your Sovereign the arduous task of reform, and having invited my advice and asked me what should be done, I will proceed to express the views which I hold and which are dictated by my feelings of patriotism. These unbiassed opinions have been formed after nine years' study of science, international law, and political economy, and after thirty-eight years of service at home and abroad in diplomacy, home affairs, and the army, and the information and experience which I have gathered will on this occasion necessarily be placed without partisanship before your Highness.

Atabeg's Policy discussed and censured. Firstly, with your Highness permit me to say that the state of affairs is so unsatisfactory that I am powerless to relate it to you and you to listen, but despair and weakness prove want of cure, and the finding of no way of reform proves want of energy, and failure to put things right would be dishonourable. Yes, if all the care and attention which your Highness now gives to affairs had been shown by your Highness' predecessor, who has thrown us into such trouble, he would not now be travelling aimlessly round the world. In short, most of the trouble we now find ourselves confronted with is due to him. A queer story comes to my mind

* About Government in India.

* Printed with brackets.

from which an idea can be formed of the kind of spirit in which the late Sadr Azam conducted affairs for twenty odd years.

The Atabeg's Pension. It was the second year of His present Majesty's reign, and I had come temporarily from Berlin to pay homage to His Majesty. One night I was at table, the guest of the ex-Sadr Azam at his park, with several others in his confidence. The Ferman Fermal had just been deprived of his post of Governor of Tehran and was the object of his hatred. Your Highness was Governor of Mazanderan, and there was talk of your Highness' recall through "anderoon" influences, and on that day his Highness the Sadr Azam returned from the Palace in great disturbance and anger, and towards the end of the dinner the explosion occurred, and the lightning and thunder of his anger broke upon us. First the fire was poured upon the Ferman Fermal, then became general, and he shouted, "Oh! sons of burned fathers! I am the son of Ibrahim Abkar, and I. Sons of burned fathers, I am your lord and master!" I did not understand to what this referred and what he had been told in private, that he should say this in reply.

The musicians were playing and singing, and they redoubled their efforts to calm his anger, and the head of the Sadr Azam was drunk. Coffee was brought, and his Highness, taking a coffee cup in his hand, said, "I also drink to some one's health," and, holding his cup aloft, added, "This is coffee and bitter coffee, you know on what occasions he is drunk" (his reference was to mourning); "I drink this coffee to him who sacrifices me for worthless persons." He drank the coffee to the dregs, and threw the cup on the floor. The effect upon us all was as if he had huried us beneath the weight of the whole universe. I was sitting opposite him, and could not contain myself, and, powerless to control my feelings, I rose from my place and said, "Sir, we all love our Sovereign, and cannot acquiesce in such a thing." The proceedings of that evening were reported by the Ferman Fermal to His Majesty, and two days later the Amin-es-Sultan was dismissed from office, and retired to Kum.

His Reinstatement. Two years later he was recalled from Kum and again appointed Grand Vizier, and it was a great mistake, for his one object was then revenge on his King and State, not only on this and that person, among whom was myself. As, for instance, the loans from Russia under conditions which are known, and were accepted without consulting either the Sovereign or Government, and which placed us permanently in the grip of the Russians; then the Russian Banks, which was brought to compare against the English Bank and made our position harder, and placed our trade and revenue at their mercy; the giving of our roads to the Russians was really the closing of the trade routes on us. In assisting the Russian Government in their projects in this country, the Persian Government became the slaves of the Russians, and our relations became difficult, and this was all done to place the Persian Government in insurmountable difficulties. The helping of General Kossakofsky to plunder the State of over 300,000 tomans, and the covering of his breast with decorations, and his promotion to the rank of Sardar, was tantamount to a proclamation in St. Petersburg of his (the Sadr Azam's) faithful servitude to Russia. The new Tariff was arranged to promote Russian trade, and A. Nours, from whom he took 1,000 tomans daily, was made the faithful friend of Russia.

The sale of local Governorships in that manner was to bring the Governors to their present condition. The bribes given to the Mollahs were to prevent their opposition, and to make them feign their belief in the excuses for his faults, the blame for which was thrown upon the Chamberlains. A deficit of 3 crores in the Maliat, although 5 crores have been added yearly to the taxes of the State, was to bring about national bankruptcy and despair in the heart of the people. Placing the seal of office in the hands of Mirzas who sold Firman was to bring about disorder and confusion.

In short, the list of iniquities passes all limits. But of what use? The faults have been committed, and are accomplished facts.

What can be expected of one who was not educated to the theory and practice of an Administration, and knows nothing of the rights, laws, or conditions governing political economy, diplomacy, or politics, either at home or abroad.

The object of these reiterations is to draw your Highness' attention to those abuses and errors for the correction of which you have been deputed and chosen, and to show what our position is in relation to foreign affairs, and how our present home affairs stand.

First, let me submit the state of our foreign affairs:—

Foreign Policy.—Three neighbouring States—England, Russia, and Turkey—have each their own interests in our country, and we should have our own special interests to

look after in regard to each of them. Those which concern Turkey are the cause of no great anxiety. Religious animosity and racial differences have always existed and cannot cause anxiety, and there is no hope of reconciling the antagonistic interests and views. Let us pass from this subject, as this is not the place to discuss the politics of the two countries in relation to each other. Our fears and hopes are directed to the two other States who are antagonistic, not only in Persia, but perhaps even over the whole world; and our integrity is dependent on this same animosity between the two States. Oh! that the day may not come when those two States will come to an agreement of interest with regard to us. But it will not come about, and to our good fortune they are both bound to maintain our integrity, and it is unfortunate that we have not recognized and realized our position between the two antagonists and have not profited by it. We have, on the contrary, always feared the partition of our country between them, and this on account of the speculations on the subject which are indulged in by generally very ill-informed newspapers, and such an idea has constantly intimidated us without reason, and we have always felt on account of it as it were between the hammer and the anvil. An accord of interest between them is quite out of the question, because the partition of Persia between Russia and England cannot possibly be in the interests of either; and both must necessarily aim at maintaining the integrity of Persia. Passing from the question of partition, the entire absorption of Persia by either of these two States is also unadvisable and impracticable, because the policy of Great Britain must be to maintain a neutral region between itself and Russia and to avoid the expense and trouble of contiguity. The policy of Great Britain in Afghanistan is a proof of this. The idea of absorption by Russia is also out of the question, because for every step which she will take in the north Great Britain will be obliged to take a similar step in the south. Secondly, if Great Britain, either through the force of circumstances or in pursuance of its own interests, leaves the field open to Russia, though the annexation of Persia can be achieved by 20,000 men, a complete hold over Persia with its tribes would be difficult to maintain even with 200,000 men, and would perhaps be impossible with that number; and thousands of crores would have to be spent on roads and fortifications, &c., as well as maritime works in the Persian Gulf, and would in the end only make their position more dangerous in respect to their enemies.

Yes, the policy of Russia is that of world-wide annexation, but the rest of the world is there to prevent it. It was thus that in the Eastern, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern questions the field was not left open to them, and is not being left open now. It is furthermore certain that in Persia they will not be allowed to have it entirely their own way, unless we ourselves, in the extremity of dishonour, disregard and carelessness of our Faith and State, should ourselves sacrifice them by throwing ourselves at the feet of Russia, as those pro-Russian Ministers have done so far. As your Highness is a lover of our Sovereign, our Faith and State, and is himself a member of the Royal Family, and can be trusted to protect us, I submit the true facts to him as they appear to me in the hope of his remedying the evils pointed out.

Our country has for two important reasons become entangled. One is a financial reason, and the other is connected with her independence, and both have been caused by the loans. That is to say, on account of the manner and conditions on which the loans were made from Russia. Yes, we were forced to make a loan, and to do so was not a mistake, and a loan as it was negotiated in the first instance was even desirable, and the idea was pursued after the fall of the Amin-es-Sultan and his retirement to Kum. The Ferman Fermal and Haji Mohsin Khan, the late Mashir-ed-Dowleh, and the late Mukhtar-ed-Dowleh, took steps with that object, and I was entrusted with the negotiations for that purpose in Germany, and in Tehran negotiations were carried on with the German Minister, Baron Gierke. The German Government was prepared to advance 200,000,000 marks, which at that time was equivalent to 100 crores of tomans, but the important condition was the specification of the use to which the money would be put, such as the bringing of the water of the Shalrud River to the district of Kazvin, and the building of certain necessary factories, &c. The Firman and plenary powers were about to be issued in order that I should terminate the formalities, and after announcing the accession of His Majesty to the Courts of Austria, Germany, Italy, and the Pope, I was to return to Germany and to conclude the negotiations. I had, however, not yet finished the duties connected with my Special Mission when the late Amin-ed-Dowleh became Prime Minister and intrusted the Kavan-es-Saltaneh with the negotiations for a loan of 40,000,000 r., which he was to go to Paris to conclude. Then disputes occurred between Nizam Agha and the Kavan-es-Saltaneh with regard to the division between them of the Commission. The negotiations became known, and the Russians intrigued in the matter and the French did not give the loan. Then the

English were applied to. They, from what I hear, insisted that the sum of 10,000,000 paid to Malcolm Khan for a lottery concession should be refunded out of the loan, capital and interest, and this was not agreed to. I was again instructed to open negotiations in Berlin, but the sum wanted was so large, and the other fruitless negotiations being known, the Berlin market would not lend. His Majesty was about to start for Europe, and the Amin-ed-Dowleh could not produce the necessary funds. The Amin-ed-Dowleh was dismissed, and the Amin-es-Sultan was summoned from Kum and reappointed Grand Vizier. He thereupon borrowed from the Russians and took His Majesty to Europe. The following year he again made a loan, but in such a manner and under such conditions that it was of no advantage to the State, nor had the Government a free hand or power to borrow elsewhere under any conditions for the advantage of its finances or for the improvement of the country, and in this way our finances as well as the independence of the State have suffered.

At the same time the balance of influence between Russia and England, upon which depends the integrity of Persia, has been disturbed to such an extent that not only are our interests gravely menaced, but those of Great Britain as well, and it is of course her interest to regain the lost ground and influence at any cost, trouble, and pains, and this will not be achieved without trouble and friction with us, unless we ourselves help her in her task and look to her in future for assistance to tide the advance of Russia and think of freeing ourselves from the Russian loan obligations. These two tasks are both difficult ones to achieve; that is to say, both concord with England and a firm front to and Russia. The balance having to be held evenly between the two, it is therefore necessary that if the scales are heavier on one side a reduction should either be made there or an increase on the opposite side, in order that the equilibrium be established. To reduce the preponderating weight on the side of Russia is not in our power, and as we must choose the lesser of two evils and it is easier to conform and concur than to oppose, and moreover renders a difficult task lighter, and as the interests of the British Government in stemming the advance of Russia and maintaining our independence are identical with our own, it is possible that we might with her assistance and through her friendship achieve our ends. We with our own resources cannot retrieve the two great losses incurred through the loans from Russia together with the rights and concessions accorded therein; neither can we re-establish our finance or regain our complete independence without assistance from without; and abroad no Government has sufficient interest in Persia to oppose Russia either with regard to our integrity or to our independence. Perhaps some of the other nations are even interested in keeping the field open to the activity of Russia for the furtherance of their aims elsewhere. We have no true friend but England, and our independence is really bound up with her interests, and our salvation is in her hands; but the Persian Government has never realized this fact, and has not built up her friendship with her on a solid basis. England was in despair seeing our weakness in respect to Russia, and those Ministers who became the playthings of Russian policy estranged our true friend and made a friend of our enemy, and we have been placed between the hammer and the anvil. These are our present relations in the domain of foreign affairs.

Let me only add this, that no credit remains abroad for us among the nations, that there is no hope for us from any side, and until we ourselves reform the finances and the army of our country there will be no confidence or credit with respect to us, and until we free ourselves of the yoke of Russian pressure and protect our own independence by a mighty and energetic effort, there is no hope to be looked for elsewhere, unless it should be from Great Britain, who may regain confidence in us, for we may otherwise be involved in complications and troubles from that side as well.

If Hajj Mirza Hussein Khan had been allowed to have his way the balance of power would never have been disturbed, and Persia might to-day have been as far advanced as Japan. He always stood out firmly against both Russia and England, and told each that he was a Persian, and intended to remain one. When he said, "May the day not come when I shall lean to either side!" he was referring to Afghanistan, which, having taken sides with England, has closed the door to Russia.

It was necessary for me to mention the above for your Highness' consideration. Now, as to the affairs of the interior.

Laurin Ferabeg: Your Highness is perhaps better acquainted with the affairs of the State than myself, as you have since your childhood held important Governorships and the direction of administrative posts, and especially as to the sale of Governorships which the previous Prime Minister practised. It is clear in what light the Government appears to the people when the country is in the grip of such Governors, and into what a condition the peasantry falls. If some reform is not soon made it is certain what the

result of this souvenir of the Atabeg will be. About three crores of tomans are uncollected, and salaries and pensions are greatly in arrears. Falsified accounts are often sent in. Another loan is impossible. A reform must therefore be made in the finances and the revenue and expenditure. It is said the Government intends to reduce salaries. A reform in this way is not advisable. It will increase the destitution of the servants of the State and the difficulties of the Government. Salaries, pensions, &c., are greatly abused by falsified documents, and there is a considerable balance to the good in the provinces [resulting from an antiquated assessment.—G. P. C.], all of which goes to the profit of the Governors, and falsified documents are very common, resulting in loss to the State in the provincial revenues. The provincial representatives, the accountants, and Mustafees have appropriated revenues and pensions in the names of various persons for their own purposes, and, so far, no inquiry has been made into these cases. Therefore a start must be made by inquiring into the revenue and expenditure and into the genuineness of claims, and not by reducing salaries. Your Highness should not intrust the inquiries into the revenue and expenditure and the genuineness of claims to such and such Ministers, but to a Commission, who would be appointed with plenary powers to settle cases and not be obliged to refer them to your Highness.

The laws relating to the punishment for murder are laid down by Shar', but are carried out by the executioner. This should therefore be referred to a Commission, and the sword of justice to be used in the cases of dishonestly-acquired pensions and salaries should be placed in the hands of the Commissioners, so that your Highness should not become the object of the hate and enmity of any one, and that none should accuse your Highness of stopping salaries.

The present for the difference due to too low assessment, which has so far been paid by provincial Governors, should be abolished, and the interference of the Governors in the affairs of the land tax must be entirely eliminated, and the possibilities of illicit profits by falsified accounts entirely stopped. The Mustafees, Vazirs of provinces, and local officials must not be allowed a free hand to collect the dues which they pretend are theirs, and inspectors specially appointed by the Government must be everywhere on the watch to report how affairs are administered.

Representatives of the Department of Finance, Justice, Foreign Affairs, the War Office, and the Ministry of Commerce must be sent from the Central Government to the provinces with special instructions, and the representatives of the Local Government, who, under the present régime, resemble a pack of hungry wolves and pillage the people, must be eliminated.

A system must also be devised for the revision of the taxes due to the State and of the provincial assessment, so that it should reach the State Treasury direct, and the salaries of servants should be paid with regularity. The Government taxes are paid four months from the beginning of the year through the Provincial Governors and representatives, but they do not reach their destination and the servants of the State, who receive their salaries out of these revenues, until the end of the year, and sometimes some of them are not paid even till the next year, and some are never paid at all.

The Provincial Governors must employ trustworthy and honest servants, and their number must be limited, and they must not act in disobedience to the orders issued by the Central Government; and a Council must be formed, including the Nobility and the various representatives of the Departments of Finance, War, Justice, Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Agriculture, and the local officials, and the Governor should be President of the Council and in charge of affairs in general; and it is necessary that one representative of the Shar' (a priest) should also be present, in order that no excuse for interference or criticism should be given to the Mollahs, and trouble in consequence to the Government or disadvantage to the State and people.

*[*Governors of Frontier Provinces.*—It has been specially noticed that the Governors of frontier provinces are the servants of foreigners. True and faithful persons must be chosen who are acquainted with the rights of ourselves and our neighbours, and who can work hand in hand with the agents of our Foreign Office and maintain our rights, so that the Government should be free from the trouble arising from the disagreement of its agents, as is always the case.]

Army.—For the army a proper system is necessary, and the first obligation of the Government is a reform of this Department; and a Council must be held on this subject in order to show up the defects and remedy them. At this moment what we

* See footnote on p. 1.

have counts for nothing, and the State which has no troops has in reality nothing at all.

Education.—We have never had a Sovereign like His Majesty, gentle, desirous of progress, who quickly approves, who seeks improvements, and who loves civilization; and the schools which have been instituted in this country during the last few years have been far in excess of those opened during the preceding period. The progress of a country is seen in its schools, and special attention is necessary in this matter. These schools have so far no practical system, and the Ministry of Education is very deficient. Another Ministry—that of Public Works—shows no results at all, whereas in the way of roads, forestry, bridges, we have great possibilities before us.

Conclusion.—As your Highness must necessarily have felt a more personal interest in these matters than any one, you asked me what should be done; therefore that which has come to my mind is herewith submitted and brought to your Highness' recollection, showing what we should do, but it is in truth a mere résumé and Memorandum which has fallen from my pen. I am, however, ready whenever necessary, to go into greater detail.

No. 135.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 50. Secret.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 4, 1905.

I HAVE now had the honour to receive from the Government of India a copy of their despatch to Mr. Secretary Brodrick of the 22nd December, 1904, on which your Lordship directed me to offer my observations in your telegram No. 5 of the 21st January.

As some of the incidents of which this despatch treats occurred while I was absent from Tehran, and when Mr. Grant Duff was in charge of His Majesty's Legation, I have asked him to draw up a Memorandum on the subject, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith.

With the exception of the last item—the question of the Governorship of Seistan—which has been treated by me at length in separate Reports, the various incidents cited by the Government of India may be divided into "sins of omission," and "sins of commission" on the part of the Persian Government. They fall, that is to say, into two categories:—

1. Neglect or incapacity to punish outrages against British officers and subjects; and
2. Misdirected activity, chiefly on the part of the Shah's European officials, aiming at the increase of Persian revenue and the assertion of Persian authority to the detriment of foreign, and in the South, therefore, mainly of British, interests.

Cases (a) and (b) belong to the first of these two classes. Neither the outrages of Kurds on the Turkish frontier, nor that committed by a savage Lur tribe, which is in rebellion against the Shah's authority, upon two British officers can be imputed to the Persian Government, except in so far that it may justly be held to some extent responsible for the weakness and maladministration which have reduced large tracts of country under its nominal control to a state of anarchy. The Kurd Seyed Ghaffar, who was the author of the Urmia murders, had previously assassinated with absolute impunity some fifteen Persian subjects, and it was only when he killed a Nestorian who, although a Persian subject in Persia, was officiously protected by the British Consulate-General, that the authorities made an attempt to arrest him, though they only succeeded in doing so after he had, out of revenge for their action, also murdered an American citizen. It may be regarded as certain that if his two last victims had been pure Persian subjects, he would still have been at large, robbing and killing without interference on the part of the Persian officials. Similarly in Luristan no action of any kind would have been taken against the Direkvents had they not happened to rob a couple of Englishmen. Two years ago they attacked and stripped an entire Persian regiment, killing 150 men and taking from it 800 rifles, but no notice was taken of the outrage at Tehran, and they have since then been repeatedly allowed to raid and plunder up to the gates of the few towns in Luristan in which the authority of the Persian Government is still respected. In the present case, the

victims being British officers, the Persian Government is bestirring itself, after its usual half-hearted impotent fashion, and has at least expressed regret and its resolve to punish the offenders. It has done the same in the case of the attack on Captain Gough; besides dismissing the local Governor, notwithstanding the fear felt by the Persian Ministers for the Heir-Apparent, who was bribed by the Kurds, and whose obstructive tactics had been chiefly responsible for the unsatisfactory situation so long prevalent at Urmia. Neither cases (a) nor (b) can, I think, therefore fairly be adduced as proving unfriendliness on the part of the Persian Government, though they undoubtedly serve to illustrate its already notorious incompetence and weakness.

Cases (c) to (i), included, belong to the second category, but while I quite agree with the Government of India in the view that the encroachments which they indicate should be resisted, I do not think that these are inspired by any deliberate hostility to British interests as such or that the desire "to destroy our prestige and influence with the Arabs on the western shore of the Gulf," which Captain Trevor attributes to the Persian Government, has much, if anything at all, to do with them. The Persian Ministers know and care very little about our relations with Arabia; they lay claim to a nominal sovereignty over Bahrein, but only *pro forma*, and although they have from time to time during the last fifteen years tried to assert their pretensions to the Islands of Sirri, Tumb, and Abu Musa, which are fairly close to their own coast, they have done so, in my belief, less with the object of undermining British influence than with that of consolidating their own authority on the northern side of the Persian Gulf. It is with this object—a very natural and legitimate one from a Persian point of view, and one, moreover, which is not new, but has been steadily pursued for the last quarter of a century—that they have (to take only a few instances) replaced the hereditary Arab Sheikhs at Lingah and elsewhere by officials from Tehran, severed the connection between Bander Abbas and the Sultans of Oman, and are now encroaching as much as they dare upon the autonomy of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, besides putting customs stations and guards at such points as Kharrak and Henjam. It is in the same spirit that they are endeavouring to sap the power of the petty feudatories in Seistan and Khorassan, whether these be under our or under Russian protection, such as the Chiefs of Seistan, Kain, Kuchan, Bujuurd, &c., and to place Tehran officials in their districts. This centralizing policy has, of course, its fiscal as well as its political aspects, and it is in relation to the former, which the Shah and his money-loving Ministers probably regard as the most important, that the Belgian Customs Department is chiefly active. I do not imagine, however, that the Belgian Customs officers treat Koweit dhows more harshly than they do Persian dhows or dhows of other foreign nationalities. The injudicious severity which they display in dealing with Persian subjects has more than once occasioned, and is now again threatening to occasion, serious popular outbreaks against them, whilst their treatment of foreigners is the cause of constant complaints on the part of the Legations of Great Britain and of Russia, as well as of neutral States with insignificant commercial interests, such as France, whose Chargé d'Affaires only lately spoke to me with great bitterness about the proceedings of M. Waffelaert, the Director-General of Customs in the south. I fear, I may observe parenthetically, that M. Heynesens, who is to succeed M. Waffelaert, will not be much of an improvement on him, to judge at least by the complaints which the Russians make of the trouble which he has given them at Resht. As regards these various grievances against the Customs, I propose to discuss and try to settle each on its own merits with M. Naus. I hardly think we can complain of the establishment of new custom-houses at such places as Kharrak, if the Persians contend that they are useful for revenue purposes, but with regard to Godar-i-Bahutak, the latest correspondence respecting which I have now seen for the first time, we are justified in demanding, even if we do not insist on the actual suppression of the post, that it shall not interfere with caravans travelling between Ahwaz and Tspahan. M. Lavers promised me early last September to send orders to defer its establishment until after M. Naus' return, but I gather that these orders were received too late, as the post had, as stated by Major Cox, been already opened at the end of August and that M. Lavers was afraid, in view of this circumstance, to withdraw it. I do not know that we can well object to it, as suggested by the Government of India, on the ground that it lies too far inland, as both we and the Russians have agreed to the establishment of customs stations quite as remote from the actual frontier, such as Meshed, Kerman, and a number of minor places, whilst we have actually insisted on the maintenance of such inland stations as Shuster and Dizful. But I think we may contend that its situation on the Bakhtiari road may prove actually inconvenient. I have, I may mention, had no report on this point

from Mr. Preece, and may urge its transfer to some place rather nearer to the Turkish frontier.

I have already spoken to M. Naus about the question of Koweit, but on this I propose to report in a separate despatch dealing specially with the status of Koweit dhows and subjects in Persia.

The interference with our quarantine arrangements in the Gulf, twice attempted, once last year and once in 1902, has now been, at least provisionally, abandoned. It is intelligible that these arrangements, as well as the Russian cordon in Khorassan, which the Persian Government is now trying to starve by withholding payment, should not be altogether to the taste of the Shah's Ministers, but although they have struggled against both, in our case doubtless at Russian instigation, and in the Russian case certainly at ours, they have done so in a feeble and abortive fashion and have so far failed to get rid of either.

The interference with the postal arrangements at Bushire would not, if M. Naus had been at the time in Persia, have assumed the form it did, which was due to the precipitancy of an inexperienced and headstrong *locum tenens*, M. Lavers. M. Naus is, I understand, quite prepared to accept the position taken up by the Government of India in its telegram of the 14th December, and I think we shall be able to effect an arrangement on these lines.

To sum up, I do not consider that these incidents, taken either collectively or separately, can be regarded as proving any deliberate or systematic unfriendliness on the part of the present Government of Persia to British interests, as such. The *Ain-ol-Dowleh*, as I have often reported to your Lordship, is anti-foreign, but less unfriendly to us than to the Russians, who regard him with particular aversion, and though I think he is suspicious, like all his countrymen, of our influence and supposed aims in the south and east, he is a good deal more respectful of our rivals. His Government, in its general policy with all persons having dealings with it, follows the old methods, with which every one knowing Persia and Turkey is familiar—of oppression, extortion, and refusal of justice whenever these can be practised without danger of armed resistance, varied by apathy and weakness as soon as its maladministration provokes rebellion by warlike tribes or powerful Chiefs, whether these be Lurs, Arabs, or Kurds, or a threat by some foreign State, whose subjects have been aggrieved, that armed force will be used to procure redress. Whether any more remonstrance or diplomatic representation will suffice to obtain more than a partial and temporary abandonment of these methods may be doubted; even in Turkey, with a far more intelligent and advanced Government than that of Persia, force has often been the only convincing argument. Short of force, the only resource is persistent and more or less intimidating pressure, or the seizure of some moment when the Persians want a favour in order to make its grant dependent on a settlement in other quarters. It would, however, as I have ventured to state above, be a mistake, in my opinion, to regard the cases cited by the Government of India as evidences of any special animus against ourselves; the Turkish and Russian Governments could probably produce equally long or longer lists of complaints, and every Power having dealings with Persia has, so far as I can judge from what I hear here, similar grievances in proportion to the importance of its interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosed in No. 135.

Memorandum by Mr. Grant Duff on Despatch of December 22, 1904, from the Government of India to Mr. Brodrick.

THE present Government of Persia is unfriendly to foreigners in general. Neither the Grand Vizier nor the *Mushir-ed-Dowleh*, who are the principal officials with whom His Majesty's Legation has to deal, have been in Europe or have any real grasp of political affairs outside Persia. Both are, according to European standards, uneducated men. I may mention, as an illustration of this, that in December 1903 the former asked me questions regarding the situation in the Far East which clearly showed that he had no distinct idea in what quarter of the globe Japan was situated, or what were the questions at issue between that country and Russia. Recently, during the troubles at Urmi, his Highness displayed an equally astonishing ignorance

of the power and resources of the United States. When I assured him the United States was perhaps the most powerful country in the world, he said "Ajab!" (it is wonderful!), but I could see that he thought in making this statement I was merely trying to assist the United States' Minister in forcing the Persian Government to meet his demands for the payment of compensation in the Labaree murder case.

There is every reason to believe that the Grand Vizier is at least as unfriendly to Russia. He may not like us, but he hates and fears the Russians, who are constantly trying to bring about the return of his rival. His idea of foreign policy is steady opposition to all foreign influence in Persia, however advantageous for the country. Probably he considers European enterprise in Persia as a cause of "zachmat" (trouble) and believes that his country got on quite satisfactorily before the arrival of the accursed "Firangi" with his telegraphs and road concessions. His conception of keeping the balance between England and Russia is to thwart both parties, and he no doubt tells the Russian Legation what he tells us: that if Russia is given an inch, England asks for an ell, and *vice versa*.

As regards the Belgian officials, I am inclined to disbelieve that they are hostile to British interests. Except perhaps in Seistan, no proof seems to be forthcoming that they behave worse to us than to the other Powers. The truth would appear to be this: the Belgian employés are drawn from the "petit bourgeois" class of a not very attractive nation. These men are rarely gentlemen either by birth or education. They are mostly young and inexperienced. I may give as an instance the case of M. Lavers, the Secretary-General, that is, the official next to M. Naus. This gentleman, before his arrival in Persia, chalked boxes at a salary of 1,800 fr. (72*l.*) a-year. He now receives a salary of about 1,000*l.* a-year, and is a great man covered with gold embroidery and stars. All the salaries paid to these employés are on the same scale, and there are no doubt pickings. Is it astonishing that young and inexperienced men of lowly origin, suddenly finding themselves in positions which in their own country they could hardly expect to attain after a hard-worked life, should tend to be overhearing and perhaps corrupt? Add to this that the climate of many parts of Persia affects the nerves of Europeans, and you get the probable reasons for the exasperating conduct of some local Belgian officials, and for the sometimes acrimonious nature of the correspondence between them and our Consular officers.

Although I am hardly inclined to think the Persian Government or their Belgian employés specially hostile to British interests, I venture to suggest that occasional and judicious applications of the boot (if I may be allowed to use a homely phrase) might be salutary. The Persians, perhaps more than other nationalities, require constant keeping up to the mark. They are made to take trouble either by fear or money. They care little for strong messages or words, but the "boot" they venerate beyond anything save the kran.

I will proceed to deal briefly with the cases alluded to in the despatch of the Government of India:

(a.) The Urmi murders and the attack on Captain Gough were the work of Kurds, who are almost savages and in a chronic state of rebellion. These tribes are only very partially under the control of the Persian authorities. It is no doubt the duty of the latter to maintain order in the Urmi district, but the office nature of the Central Government and local fanaticism render this a difficult matter. The long delay in obtaining satisfaction in these cases is due chiefly to the action of the *Valiabad*, who is under Russian influence, and whom the Central Government, knowing that he may at any time become Shah, are loath to offend or coerce.

It is significant that a threat to use force on the part of the United States' Government brought about an unconditional compliance with their demands.

(b.) Laristan has never been really subjugated by the Kajar dynasty, and has from time immemorial been in a chronic state of rebellion. The Persian Government have practically no efficient troops at their disposal, and I am inclined to doubt their ability to deal effectively with the Lurs, who are said to be brave and well armed. Perhaps, by sowing dissension between the tribes, the authors of the outrage on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer may be brought to justice. While this will be satisfactory to us, it will in no sense pacify Laristan. It is difficult to see that the Persian Government have displayed any intentional unfriendliness in this case. Colonel Douglas was travelling on the *Disful* road in a notoriously disturbed district without their knowledge. The untoward incident which occurred was due to the anarchical state of Laristan, and was in no way instigated by the Government. Of

course, it is fair to hold the Government responsible and to demand compensation, but the sin was one of omission, and not commission, on their part.

(c.) (d.) (e.) I understand that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh has issued general instructions to the Persian officials in the Gulf to recognize natives of Koweit as independent, and in no way subjects either of Great Britain or of Turkey. The action of the Customs officials in these cases seems to have been influenced rather by excess of zeal than intentional unfriendliness, and I think it probable that the "Directeurs des Douanes" acted on their own initiative without definite instructions from Tehran. As regards (e), I believe the demand for payment of "droits de Chancellerie" has now been dropped, as it is some time since the Sheikh has complained about them. He does not usually suffer in silence.

(f.) The customs post at Godar-i-Balutak was originally included in the tableaux of the Règlement through an oversight on the part of His Majesty's Legation. It appears not to affect British trade, and there is no Belgian official there. Mr. Preece, who recently travelled on the Bakhtiari road, has not reported that the Khans in any way resented the establishment of this post. It is not improbable that M. Naus would remove it if pressed.

(g.) At the time I spoke to M. Lavers about this matter, he said that the Grand Vizier had specially requested him to establish a customs post on Kharak Island. His Highness, when I pressed him not to proceed with the erection of the post, on the ground that it would lead to the harassment of Indian and Arab trade, replied that it was necessary in the interests of Persian trade, to which he must give preference. I confess I cannot see that this was in any way unfriendly.

(h.) Further interference by the Customs officials with quarantine arrangements in the Gulf would be an unfriendly act, and should, I venture to think, be resisted, if necessary by force. M. Naus loves power, and I am convinced that it is he, and not the Persian Government, who will do it there. The latter care little about quarantine matters.

(i.) The incident of the seizure of the British mails was entirely due to the impetuosity of M. Lavers, a callow nurseling of some twenty-six summers. The Persian Government knew nothing of the matter until I called their attention to it. The few days' delay in returning the bags was due to an interruption in the Tehran-Bushire telegraph line. I doubt if M. Lavers will again act so unwisely, but I doubt the desirability of asking for an apology. It would, I venture to suggest, be more effectual to say that, should anything of the sort occur again, we should insist on the dismissal of the Belgian official concerned.

(k.) I have already given my views regarding the Hashmat question in my despatch to Lord Lansdowne, No. 6 of the 5th January.

The Hashmat-ul-Mulk is hardly a worthy object of our solicitude, but as we have so far supported him and sent sundry strong messages to the Persian Government as to our probable action should he be dismissed from his Government, it would, I conceive, be hardly consistent or to the advantage of our prestige to acquiesce in his removal or his detention at Tehran.

No. 136.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 53.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 8, 1905.

I LEARN from the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that sixty Persian subjects were killed during the recent disorders at Baku. His Excellency states that the Persian Government has presented a claim for compensation to that of Russia.

The figures given me by other informants are much higher, one, a person connected with the Russian Legation, estimating the Persian victims, on the strength of news received from Baku, at several hundreds. This informant stated that the Russian Government would refuse the Persian demand for compensation on the ground that the Persians had been the aggressors, but confirmed the reports which have reached me from Persian sources that the scenes witnessed were of a revolting character, corpses lying in the streets for several days, owing to the refusal of each of the rival factions to permit its opponents to remove their dead for burial.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 137 A.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 39.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 27, 1905.

FOLLOWING has been repeated to India:—

During the Valiahd's absence, the Nizam-ol-Saltanah was appointed Acting Governor-General of Azerbaijan, but the Russian Legation have protested, on the score that the Nizam is hostile to them; the Grand Vizier has disregarded the protest, and asked the Nizam to leave at once for Tabreez. Altogether, Russian relations with Persia are somewhat strained at present.

No. 137 B.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 27.)

(No. 40.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 27, 1905.

FOLLOWING repeated to India:—

It is now announced that the Shah will leave for Europe at the end of April via Meshed and Tashkend. The cost of the journey is estimated at about 60,000*l.*, of which 40,000*l.* will be provided from the private purse of the Shah. The Shah practically threatened the Grand Vizier that, unless the journey were arranged, he would reappoint the Atabeg. If the journey has to be abandoned the Grand Vizier may fall, and it is doubtful whether, if deferred to so late as the date now announced, it will be practicable.

No. 137.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord,

Tehran, March 8, 1905.

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 12 of the 12th January last, I inquired of my United States' colleague whether there was any foundation for the official statement published at St. Petersburg that his Government had thanked that of Russia for assistance rendered in settling the Urmia murder difficulty.

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the reply which I have received from Mr. Pearson, and which proves that as far as the American Government is concerned the official statement forwarded by His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg is a fabrication of a peculiarly audacious character.

The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, to whom I also spoke on the subject, said that his attention had been called to the communiqué in question about a fortnight previously, and that the Shah had commanded him to deny its truth, and to instruct the Persian Minister at St. Petersburg to contradict it. The Urmia affair, observed his Excellency, had been settled between the Persian and American Governments without any Russian intervention whatever.

Your Lordship is aware, from my reports, that the Russian Representatives in Persia did all they could by underhand methods to prevent the punishment of the murderers, partly, I imagine, because they hoped thereby to strengthen their influence over the Valiahd, and partly in order to damage British prestige, American citizens in Azerbaijan being under the protection of His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, and the interests of the American and British missionaries identical. They only desisted when they realized that the United States' Government would, if need be, use force to obtain satisfaction. The Russian Government appears now to be trying to save its face, and bolster up the legend that its influence here renders it the arbiter in all controversies between Persia and foreign Powers, by publishing a deliberately false statement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 137.

*Mr. Pearson to Sir A. Hardinge.**United States' Legation, Tehran,
March 8, 1905.*

Dear Sir Arthur Hardinge,

THE report that the American Government has thanked the Russian Government for assistance in reaching a basis of settlement in the Labaree Case is much worse than absurd.

I have advised my Government of the constant and generous support in this matter rendered by the British Legation as well as by the British Consuls at Urmia and Tabreez. But candour and loyalty obliged me to notify my Government that one of the chief obstacles in the way of reaching an understanding with the Persian Government in this case was the sinister and unprovoked opposition as reported to me of the Russian Legation at Tehran before the arrival of the present Minister M. de Speyer.

Use this as you please, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) RICHMOND PEARSON.

No. 138.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 29.)

The Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Brodrick, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 20th March, relative to the Perso-Baluch boundary.

India Office, March 28, 1905.

Inclosure in No. 138.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, March 20, 1905.

PLEASE refer to your telegram of the 27th February regarding the frontier between Persia and Baluchistan. Instructions have been sent to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to endeavour to effect a settlement on the lines you suggest.

No. 139.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 30.)

Sir,

India Office, March 29, 1905.

IN reply to your letter of the 15th instant, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to say that he concurs in Lord Lansdowne's proposal to approve the terms of the note addressed by Sir A. Hardinge to the Persian Government on the 11th January last regarding the compensation to be paid to Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer.

With regard to the question as to the course to be adopted by His Majesty's Minister in the event of the failure of the Firman Firma's punitive expedition, Mr. Brodrick has no means of gauging the probability of the acceptance by the Persian Government of the alternatives suggested by Sir A. Hardinge. The first of his suggestions, viz., that of intrusting the Government of Turistan to the Bakhtiari Khans for a term of years, would have the advantage of facilitating the introduction of a system of road-guards, should that step finally commend itself to His Majesty's Government. But the proposal raises a very large question, and Mr. Brodrick would be unwilling to offer any opinion on it in the absence of further information.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 140.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 30.)

Sir,

India Office, March 29, 1905.

IN reply to Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 18th instant, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to say that he concurs in the proposal of the Marquess of Lansdowne to approve the terms of the note which Sir A. Hardinge has addressed to the Persian Government on the subject of the Henjam-Bunder Abbas telegraph line.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 141.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 32.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, March 31, 1905.

I APPROVE your action in guaranteeing the advance to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, as reported in your telegram No. 28 of the 4th instant, but no guarantee for any further advance should be given.

No. 140 A.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 30.)

(No. 43.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 30, 1905.

FOLLOWING repeated to India:—

The title of Prince has been conferred on the Persian Minister in London. A similar distinction was conferred by the Atabeg on the Minister at St. Petersburg during the height of the intimacy with Russia, and it is evident that the present honour, the bestowal of which is unusual, is intended to indicate the increased importance which the Persian Government attaches to good relations with His Majesty's Government.

No. 140 B.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 30.)

(No. 44.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 30, 1905.

FOLLOWING repeated to Meshed and India:—

From a confidential source I hear that the Persian Consul at Askabad has telegraphed to Tehran that, in view of the recent riots at Meshed, 300 Russian Cossacks have been dispatched from Askabad to that place. The information may be incorrect, or the Cossacks may be intended for Kuchan, but the Consul believed that Meshed was their destination.

Should the Persian Government protest to me against Russian violation of their territory, what language would your Lordship wish me to hold?

No. 140 C.

Sir A. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 31.)

(No. 45.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Tehran, March 31, 1905.

M. NAUS was recently sent to me by the Grand Vizier to consult about money matters. An advance of 200,000*l.* is asked for to extinguish the present deficit. In reply to M. Naus, I explained that any such application to your Lordship would be useless, unless the Persian Government were prepared to state that they would offer in some political advantage in exchange. I briefly outlined to M. Naus the proposals which your Lordship authorized me in 1903 (see Foreign Office Telegram, No. 29, of the 27th March, 1903, and Viceroy's telegram to Secretary of State for India of the 26th February) to make to the late Grand Vizier.

Since our conversation M. Naus has seen the Grand Vizier, who rejected surprise at first at my proposals. M. Naus, however, believes that it would not be impossible to conclude an Agreement with his Highness on these lines, and he himself would evidently be prepared to recommend it. From Russian sources I learned that the Russian Government are prepared to advance 100,000*l.* but only on political conditions of great severity. The conditions imposed by us may prove more acceptable.

I should be glad to receive your Lordship's instructions, in case the Grand Vizier should offer to open negotiations with me.

No reply has as yet been received from the Russian Government to the Persian request that the payment of the floating debt of 80,000*l.* should be postponed, and it looks as if the Russians would press for payment.

In this connection M. Naus mentioned that, during the last year of the Atabeg's administration, the Russians twice asked for the Meshed-Sistan Charhar Railway in return for a fresh loan. The Atabeg's statement to Sir N. Olenovskoy (his dispatch No. 135 of the 7th June, 1904) is thus confirmed.

(Sent to India.)

No. 142.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 33.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, March 31, 1905.

THE Russians would, I presume, excuse the dispatch of Cossacks to Meshed, reported in your telegram No. 44 of yesterday, on the ground that the Persian Government are unable to repress the disorders, which are dangerous to Russian subjects and interests.

Any language you may use to the Persian Government should be guarded, but you can say that we assume that Russia will observe the international obligations by which she is bound to respect the integrity of Persia.

If this occurrence were to be made a pretext by the Russian Government for a permanent occupation, His Majesty's Government would probably respond by a counter-move in Southern Persia.

No. 143.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 53.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1905.

I HAVE received and communicated to the India Office your despatch No. 26 of the 7th ultimo respecting the Henjan-Bunder Abbas telegraph extension.

The terms of the note which you have addressed to the Persian Government on this subject are approved by His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 144.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 54.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 12 of the 18th January last respecting the attack by Direkwand Lurs on Colonel Douglas and Mr. Lorimer, and the compensation due from the Persian Government to those officers.

I approve the terms of the note which you have addressed to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh on this subject

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 145.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 55.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1905.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 32, Secret, of the 23rd ultimo, reporting a conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject of possible further financial assistance from Russia to the Persian Government.

I approve your language to the Ain-ed-Dowleh on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.